THE

Harbinger of Light.

A

MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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THE report of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists which appears in another column, indicates that that body has not been idle during the past year, though untoward circumstances, against which they could not provide, have somewhat interfered with the fulfilment of their mission. Wanting a Spiritualistic lecturer to fill their platform until such time as Mr. Denton completed his New Zealand tour, and being advised that Mr. Walker was desirous of returning to Victoria, where he had lectured for them as a trance-medium in 1879, a telegram was sent to him at the "Cape," inviting him to come on. He immediately responded, expressing his delight at the prospect of returning to his old field of labour, and promising to leave by first mail after his letter. The committee of the V. A. S. had no intimation of any change of views on the part of Mr. Walker, nor did he enlighten them on his arrival. He was received as a Spiritualist, spoke and lectured as such and in a letter to the *Age*, in defence of Mrs. Foye, published in November last, spoke of Spiritualism as 'a complete induction, because it harmonises with every fact in the universe!"

It is not to be wondered at that under these circumstances the committee were unprepared for Mr. Walker's rapid change of front, and that their arrangements were somewhat disordered by his *coup d' etat;* they were, however, equal to the occasion, and immediately arranged with Mr. Denton to come on as early as possible, securing for him the best house obtainable, and organising an excellent choir for the Sunday services. Correspondence was opened with some of the best and most trustworthy speakers in America and England, and arrangements are being made for a sequence of them to follow Mr. Denton; meantime, that gentleman is expounding religion, science, and philosophy with such power and eloquence as has rarely been equalled in this city, to audiences which fill the house from floor to ceiling. By this means rational Spiritualism and religious Freethought, which are the propaganda of the Association, are kept before the public of the metropolis until such time as an influx of speakers will enable them to extend their operations.

Another work of the Association is the encouragement of reliable mediums, capable of giving evidence of the phenomenal facts which form the groundwork of the Spiritual Philosophy. This is a most delicate and difficult task, the materialistic tendency of the age, and the orthodox interpretation of revealed religion, being both opposed to a belief in the power of disembodied spirits to produce physical phenomena in the present day, still it is an essential to many minds, and although this powerful prejudice and determined disbelief of the multitude make the work anything but inviting, there are some courageous enough to brave the sneers and suspicions of the many for the benefit of the few earnest truth-seekers who are capable of approaching the matter in a philosophical spirit, and judging it by the evidence of their own senses. The only mediums that the Association has been enabled to bring under notice and utilise for the advancement of psychic facts, during the past twelve months, are Mrs. Ada Foye and Mr. George Spriggs; the former, by her exceptional powers, which enable her to meet large audiences, forced conviction upon the minds of numbers of intelligent persons during her brief visit here; the latter, from the delicate conditions necessary for the evolution of the wonderful phenomena which pertain to his mediumship, is only accessible to a few; nevertheless, during the past twelve months, about one hundred and fifty persons, from this and the neighbouring colonies, have been witnesses of it; the large majority (even with the limited experience of a single sitting) having seen enough to satisfy themselves of the genuineness of the phenomena, whilst the testimony of the committee published from time to time in this paper, and summarised in the July number, gives solidity to the separate experiences of individuals. This phase of the phenomena, however, is not one adapted to those on the first steps of investigation; it is too foreign to the general conceptions of

matter and spirit to meet with ready acceptance by even the honest sceptic, who can easier doubt the reliability of his own senses than accept the Spiritual solution of the phenomena. What is most wanted is a "test medium," and failing Mrs. Foye's being able to come again within a reasonable time, other reliable mediums of this class will be invited, (one already having been written to) with the view of meeting the public demand for proofs of spirit intercourse with the world. At present the whole income of the Association is consumed in maintaining the lecture platform and reading-room, but as soon as sufficient funds are available, the printing press will be called into requisition, and the propaganda augmented by the diffusion of tracts and leaflets, giving information on, and correcting popular errors with regard to, Spiritualism. To meet present requirements in this direction, the secretary has been authorised to distribute to enquirers some thousands of Spiritualistic newspapers, comprising files of the leading English and American journals of the past few years. In view of the work the Association has done, is doing, and promises to do, we think it is entitled to a larger measure of support from those in harmony with its principles, and, for that reason, take the present opportunity to bring its claims before our country readers, who are not so cognisant of the influence it is exerting in the advancement of Spiritual truths and purposes. Country friends who do not require to use the lending library may obtain all other privileges of membership by payment of a minimum subscription of 10/ per annum, with the knowledge that their subscriptions will be utilised in the diffusion of Light on those subjects which they, as rational Spiritualists, deem to be of great advantage to humanity, thereby strengthening the Society and helping forward the car of progress, which sometimes drags for want of lubrication. This is a duty incumbent upon all who have tasted the sweets of Spiritual communion, and rejoiced in the absolute knowledge of an after-life. There are sins of *omission* as well as *commission*, and although we have no devil to frighten sinners with, and would rather rely upon their doing right for right's sake, they may rest assured that their sins will, sooner or later, find them out and cause at least regret for unfulfilled duties in this life.

THE RELIGION OF TRUTH.

Part VII.

By H. J. Browne.

In submitting for the consideration of others the following brief summary of what I have learned, either directly or indirectly, through Spirit-communion, I may remark it is not claimed to be infallible, but merely as embodying those views which, after careful study and earnest consideration, appear to me to be reasonable and true. Doubtless, to those who from childhood have been accustomed to hear only the popular religious opinions expounded and extolled, many of the views expressed herein will seem utopian. It should be borne in mind, however, that every newly learnt truth appears strange at first, and that we should, as Tyndall observes, "have but one desire, to know the truth—but one fear to believe a lie." All statements, including those herein set forth, should therefore be passed through the sieve of reason, and only "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure" should be retained, all else being rejected as unworthy of acceptance. Religious convictions must, with all who are honest, change with advancing knowledge, and error, which is transient, in time give place to truth, which is eternal. All the reformers of the past have been freethinkers, and have been looked upon as infidels by the orthodox of their day because they did not endorse the current popular opinions in regard to religion. It is, in fact, to freethinkers that the world is indebted for its advancement.

The popular notions of our day regarding the life to come are as vague as they are false and irrational. Many unreasonably imagine that on entrance into Spirit-life if the religious opinions entertained by them are wrong they will be immediately changed; but views which have been cherished for a lifetime, however absurd they may be, are not so easily got rid of, they, in fact, become part and parcel of ourselves. In corroboration of this we have only to consider the difficulty experienced in this life in unlearning erroneous ideas which have been instilled into our minds from infancy, even after their irrationality has been clearly pointed out to us. It is the same in the infer life, for the death-change does not immediately alter our views or character, and thus transform us into other individuals, it only alters our condition. It does not suddenly convert the Atheist into a Deist any more than it converts a Roman Catholic into a Protestant or a Superstitionist into a Rationalist. Most people also foolishly expect on waking up in the inner-life to see the Infinite, and on finding their ideas concerning the spirit-world not realised they feel greatly disappointed. Many, on this account, come to the conclusion that they are merely in an intermediate state, and that before their anticipations can be realised they will have to wait until a great trumpet is sounded and a general assize court is held, being totally oblivious of the fact that if frail humanity were to be tried by the standard of Infinite Perfection, not a single soul would escape condemnation, for "there is none good but One, that is God."

As the law of gravitation prevails in the physical world, so does the law of affinity in the spiritual world. Everyone, therefore, on entering spirit-life is attracted to spirits who hold similar views to themselves; consequently, those who are wedded to any particular form of belief join those spirits who still adhere to the religious denomination to which they were allied when in the body, and continue therein until their eyes are opened through their using their reasoning faculties and thereby becoming more enlightened. In this way, strange as it may appear to those who learn it for the first time, the various religious sects of Earth are perpetuated in the Spirit-world, in the lower spheres of which there exist as great diversities of opinion as with us. There, as here, in order to ascertain the truth in regard to spiritual matters, as in all else, each individual has to exercise that divine faculty of reason with which he is endowed, and there, as here, until he does so he remains in ignorance of those eternal verities upon which all the more advanced in spiritual knowledge are agreed. Truth in itself is absolute, but, in the inner-life as well as in this, man's conception of it is, and always will be, relative and progressive. So soon, however, as the spirit of man, whether embodied or disembodied, listens to the voice of reason, which is the voice of God within, he begins to strive after that which is true and right, in place of the error which, in ignorance, he has been worshipping under the name of truth, and in this way alone can spiritual light be obtained. The true scientist, whether in the physical or spiritual domain of knowledge, follows truth wheresoever it leads, irrespective of popular opinion or assumed divine authority, for he knows that faith must eventually give place to knowledge, dogma to logic, and prejudice to facts. He therefore counts all else than truth as dross to be cast aside, being not only worthless, but injurious.

The Universe is dual, comprehending as it does all things, both in the physical and spiritual worlds, which we term organic and inorganic, animate and inanimate. The two worlds are not far apart as falsely taught, for they interblend. Nature is not confined to the physical world as erroneously supposed, it is infinite and uni-

versal. Matter, whether physical or spiritual, is essentially passive. It therefore cannot manifest all the varied forms and phenomena of nature without being operated upon by a higher force and intelligence to the matter itself, and the cause must be adequate to the result. It is true that matter is not to be found in an inactive state, but it does not follow from this that force is an attribute of matter, any more than that life is an attribute of perception because the latter is always associated with life. The way in which atoms unite to form molecules demonstrates that they are influenced by an intelligent though invisible directive Power, and the stupendous phenomena witnessed both in the physical and spiritual worlds testify of an ever-present divine mind working in and through all things. It is impossible, however, for man or angel, who are both finite, to comprehend or define the Infinite, but even when in this, the physical or rudimentary stage of existence, we can form a general qualitive though not a quantitive conception of the great Eternal Cause from the innumerable evidences of intelligent force manifested in all things within our observation. It is therefore evident to all unprejudiced students of nature that an indwelling mind accomplishes all things by a perfection of system, and that everything is being developed by an absolute law of evolution from a lower to a higher condition. It is also obvious that all objects are arranged on the law of unity and formed on the universal law of progressive development, whereby endless and new varieties of life are constantly being evolved; consequently the existence of an intelligent influence, operating unceasingly according to law, is thereby proved. This supreme permeating and animating Power—the Life of all lives, the Soul of all souls, the Source of all intelligence, the Fountain of all love, the Potency of all matter manifesting consciousness everywhere, the Infinite and ever-present Cause, is unity as comprehending all things and multiform as being in all things. The universal and ceaseless Effect is termed nature. Matter, which is the medium acted on, is controlled by the Infinite breathing through nature's laws. Will-power is the all-pervading force in the dual universe, and magnetism is the connecting link or bridge which unites the spiritual and physical worlds.

As on Earth so in the spirit-world God is alone known through His works, but in the latter these are more clearly perceived than in the former, the spiritual vision being clearer and more expansive than the physical eyesight. The law of cause and effect is continuous and universal, so also are the love and mercy of God. The spirit-world, although it differs in conditions and is superior to the physical, is equally natural, being as much within the sphere of universal nature as is the physical world. Many of the laws which appertain to the spirit-world are, however, different from those which rule on earth, the properties of spiritual matter differing greatly from those of physical matter. The one consists of sublimated, the other of gross matter. Every form of physical matter, except that in a gaseous state, has a spirit-counterpart. Fire has no spirit-counterpart. (Scientists affirm that the spectrum of solid matter is continuous, whereas that of ignited matter is discontinuous.) The spirit-counterpart of an object can be separated from the physical by fire or by the will power of a spirit. By the natural law of attraction the spirit of man at the death-change retains the counterpart of the clothes he has been accustomed to wear, these having thereby become saturated with his magnetism. This severance is effected unconsciously by the spirit. Objects which have had their spirit-counterpart removed cannot be distinguished by the physical eyesight from those that have their spirit-counterpart attached. What is termed inanimate matter does not perish when its spirit-counterpart is severed from it, as do the physical bodies of animate beings. It is the spirit-counterpart that is visible and tangible to the disembodied. The spirit of man at the death-change absorbs all the particles of vitalised matter which his physical body contained; when this is accomplished the latter commences to decay. In some cases, even when in this life, man's spirit can leave the body for a time, but it is connected thereto by a magnetic tie. Should this, however, from any cause be severed, the death of the body would ensue. At the death of the lower animals, owing to their being only partially individualised, their spirit-counterpart becomes merely so much spirit-matter or life-essence which, in time, is reabsorbed into other forms of life. In rare instances, however, animals on which human affection has been strongly set appear to have a temporary spirit existence after the death of their physical bodies.

Man is a microcosm, or an epitome of the Universe, representing in himself both the physical and spiritual worlds. He, like the universe, is governed by an indwelling mind, only in him the directing conscious intelligence is finite, whereas that in the universe is infinite. "The finite postulates the Infinite." As in the universe the spiritual and physical interblend, so do they in man, within whose complex being the various forces of the dual universe are represented, and in whom are all the substances and elements that exist exterior to him. Every physical organ in man has its spirit-counterpart or corresponding spiritual organ. Man's spiritual form is a fac-simile of his physical body, only it is slightly less in size. The latter is composed of gross matter and is temporal, the former consists of etherealised matter, and is undying, owing to the divine spark within by which it is vivified. As the fruit is the ultimate of the tree and contains the germ of future life, so man is the ultimate of matter and possesses the germ of angelic life which nothing can extinguish, for an unquenchable spark of divinity dwells in every human being. This divine essence or soul in man may be compared to a flame which shines through the spiritual nature of everyone according as they cultivate their better part. And again, this spiritual nature of man is reflected through his outward or physical form according as he subdues his animal propensities and thereby causes them to be under subjection to his higher or spiritual nature.

Man's physical body is but the chrysalistic shell or the temporary scaffolding necessary for the development of his spiritual organism during his schooling on the mundane plane of existence, preparatory to his graduating in the great spiritual university of the spheres. His physical organs are but the instruments through which, whilst embodied, his spiritual organs act. The latter, although they are invisible to the eye, constitute the real man, "for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." If, as every one who has given the subject the slightest consideration must admit, man's outward frame is "fearfully and wonderfully made," how much more so must be the spiritual organism which, throughout the various stages of earth-life, stamps with his individuality the constantly changing fleshly body?

Divine law is uniform, but it has two phases, viz., the physical and spiritual, both of which are natural. The spiritual organism of man is as natural as is his physical body, for if not natural it must be unnatural, consequently not of God. Mundane and supermundane, sensuous and supersensuous, physical and spiritual, include all things that exist, therefore nothing can be supernatural, for nature, which is the manifestation of God, is infinite.

Man, when on the mundane plane of life, is simply an incarnated spirit destined to progress through ever advancing grades of existence, and to pass onward to higher and still higher spheres of life. As the spirit is necessary to the development of man's physical body, so spirit cannot be developed without passing through the material plane of existence. Life must exist before death can take place, and death is necessary for the continuance and progression of life. Physical death is not the extinction, but rather the continuation of life, for nothing is lost in the transformation but the material husk or shell necessary for the development of the spirit whilst it remains on the physical plane of existence.

"There's no such thing as death;
That which is thus miscalled
Is life escaping from the chains
That have so long enthralled."

Man is endowed, in a finite degree, with the divine faculty of reason and the power, to a limited extent, to act as a free agent to choose between the suggestions of his selfish nature and the promptings of his better part. He can either cultivate his spiritual nature so as to have the mastery over his animal propensities, or he can ignore it and thereby become more brutish than the beasts of the field. (Examples of the latter class are unfortunately too numerous in our midst notwithstanding our boasted civilisation.) Mankind, in fact, consists of spirits corporeally enshrined, or temporally clothed in flesh, varying in development from the dark spirit of criminal habits and tastes to the bright angel of unselfish love.

At the outset of life man is dependent on pre-natal circumstances for his animal body, or the house he lives in as it has been termed. In consequence of this some start life under greater disadvantages and have far more to battle with during earth-life than others, owing to their having to strive against predominating passions inherited from their ancestors. Man's schooling and surroundings afterwards exercise a great influence on his spiritual development. Each individual differs from another phrenologically and in the possession of various natural gifts, but everyone (except in the case of lunatics) has the power within himself to cultivate his higher faculties, and thus, in time, to greatly ameliorate his original phrenological defects. This is a well known fact to those who have studied phrenology. One man, for instance, may cultivate his intellectual and spiritual faculties, whilst another, originally his superior phrenologically, allows them to lie dormant. In this way the man who was less gifted of the two at the outset may, in time, surpass the one who was naturally more highly endowed. Man, therefore, to a certain extent possesses the power to form his own character. Habits form our character, and character our individuality. The reign of law not being confined to this world alone our individual responsibility remains intact in the inner-life, and our aspirations, our affections, our idiosyncracies, our characters, are unaffected by the change called death. Thus the shaping of our future lies, in a great measure, in our own hands, our will being the chief arbiter of our destinies. Our individuality being continuous in spirit-life it is equally difficult for us when disembodied to change habits of thought and action, which have been indulged in for a lifetime, as it is in this life; therefore, no elevated taste is cultivated here in vain, and nothing learned here, or experience gained, is lost. Intellectual progress commences in the body or first individuality. The mind and memory appertaining as they do to the spirit, and not to the animal body, become more vivified on our awakening in the life to come; consequently we create our own surroundings on entrance into spirit-life by our thoughts and mode of life on Earth. The higher man rises in the scale of moral worth and intelligence the more God-like he becomes. His interest in this, the birth-world, does not, however, immediately cease with the change termed death.

We are not responsible for the religious views of our childhood, for these depend entirely on the circumstances of our birth or the friends by whom we were reared, over neither of which had we any control, but as soon as we arrive at that age when we can fully and freely exercise our reasoning faculties we become responsible for our every word and action. Man is responsible to himself alone, to the God-principle within him, and not, as is generally supposed, to an outside agency. We can no more sin against the Infinite than we can injure the Sun in the heavens, we can only sin against ourselves. It is true we may injure our neighbour temporarily, but the injury eventually recoils against ourselves, where it remains until we have made full compensation therefor, our only recording angel being an undying memory, our only avenging angel an exacting conscience. The ever consciousness of a wrong committed is quite enough hell to fear without the addition of a personal Devil with brimstone flames and the everlasting frowns of an angry Deity. Every cherished thought and every action of our lives on earth are indelibly photographed on our spirit-form and are apparent, not only to ourselves, but to all we come in contact with in spirit-life. Even whilst we are in the body our every thought is open to those in the inner-life; consequently, "there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known." These facts may not be pleasant to contemplate, but nevertheless they are true, and therefore it is well that they should be known by all. As the microscope has revealed a world in our midst before unknown, so in like manner does our spiritual vision on its becoming opened reveal to us the great unseen world by which we have all along been surrounded. Seeing, therefore, that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every folly, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run circumspectly, the race that is set before us, with Love as our motto and Truth as our guide.

"Some men there are (I have known such) who think
That the two worlds—the seen and the unseen—
Are like two hemispheres upon our maps,
And touch each other only at a point.
But the two worlds are not divided thus,
Save for the purpose of common speech."

"The spiritual world
Lies all about us, and its avenues
Are open to the unseen feet of phantoms
That come and go, and we perceive them not,
Save by their influence; or when at times
A most mysterious Providence permits them
To manifest themselves to mortal eyes."

THE EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUALISM.

This forthcoming work on "Spiritualism," by Mr. W. D. C. Denovan, of Sandhurst, is beginning to be looked forward to with considerable interest by Spiritualists and Freethinkers. It is expected to be ready for publication about Christmas, and will be a very large volume of between 600 and 700 pages. It will consist of lectures and addresses by the author, and a voluminous record of the leading Spiritual phenomena classified, gathered from all reliable sources in England, America, Australia, and elsewhere, illustrated with some fourteen lithographs of direct writings and spirit-photographs, original communications by colonial witnesses, and accounts of the author's own investigations and experiences, extending over a series of years.

The author's object in publishing such a large work on Spiritualism is of a twofold character: 1st., to diffuse information of a reliable nature amongst intelligent persons principally in the Australasian colonies respecting the Spiritual phenomena; and, secondly, to preserve many of these important facts in a collected form for the use of Spiritualists themselves.

The author is desirous of circulating his book principally amongst the squatters, landowners, and other residents in the country districts throughout Australia, as he believes it will prove a powerful weapon in checkmating the growing spread of Materialistic principles, and of demonstrating to their minds, by evidence which cannot be gainsaid, the truth of the doctrine of a life beyond the grave. He, therefore, has requested us to urge upon all wealthy Spiritualists in these colonies the duty of aiding him in making this effort a success by ordering dozens of copies of his work and circulating it in the way as suggested everywhere amongst their friends.

The issue of Mr. Denovan's book, we are informed will be limited to 1000 *copies*, and so those who feel desirous of lending a helping hand to the author in spreading a knowledge of the principles and phenomena of Spiritualism, should lose no time in sending in their orders, with their names and addresses, to Mr. W. H. Terry, 84 Russell-street, Melbourne.

The book, we are given to understand, is to be dedicated to "Young Australia." We hope to give some extracts from it in a future number. We may however add, from what we know, that it will be one of the most compendious books on the phenomena of Spiritualism ever published in this or any other country.

THE MATERIALISATION SEANCES.

THESE interesting séances were resumed last Tuesday, in the library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists. Two forms materialised, shook hands with the circle, and "Geordie," with all present. The eastern spirit known as "Charity" came well forward, and shewed her foot and ankle plainly. "Ski" was in excellent voice, and talked with great volubility. The two visitors who were present were delighted with the séance, and quite satisfied of the separate identity of the forms, the medium being distinctly seen by them at the same time. Some friends of Mr. Spriggs who have had ample opportunity of testing his mediumship, are getting up a testimonial to him, expressing their entire confidence in him and appreciation of his mediumship. Quite a number of signatures are already attached to it. We shall publish it next month.

A LIBERAL OFFER.

A gentleman who has at his own expence sent a copy of "Spiritualism at the Church Congress," to all the clergy in Tasmania, offers the sum of £2 10s. towards the enlightenment of the Australian clergy by the same means, provided £7 10s. is added to it by local subscriptions. We have received £3 2s. from two gentlemen towards this object, and now ask the assistance of others interested in the advancement of Spiritualism to make up the necessary amount. The changed attitude towards Spiritualism of the English clergy, as indicated in this pamphlet, cannot fail to make an impression on their colonial brothers and modify their antagonism to Spiritualism. A specimen copy will be sent to perspective subscribers who have not yet seen this excellent pamphlet.

TO STUDENTS OF MENTAL SCIENCE.

THE following extract from the lecture of the Rev. Joseph Cook, delivered in the Melbourne Town Hall, on "Spiritualism and Demonology," is a valuable and interesting contribution to the above subject:—

Mr. Cook read a letter received from a friend, in which the latter narrates a strange experience of his when referring to a fellow-student who possessed exceptional ability, and who was seated close to him, he says, "His right arm leant on the desk; my right arm leant on the same desk; our heads almost touched. The topic of the evening was one on which I had thought but little; but while the elder was speaking, thoughts arranged in an orderly manner, and clothed in choice language, rushed into my mind. Surprised at the expressions and illustrations that occurred to me, for I had never heard of them before; gratified and amazed at the sudden illumination of my mind, and fearful that the departure of the thoughts, expressions, and illustrations might be as hasty as their coming, I rose to my feet. Noticing that my gifted neighbour had also risen, I yielded to him. Judge of my astonishment when, even to the use of the peculiar expressions and illustrations, he gave the speech which I was about to make! I afterwards found that he had been studying the subject discussed by the elder, and had promised to support him at the meeting. By some means I had read or taken his thoughts, absorbed speech which had not been written or spoken. It was no effect of the imagination, but was real to me."

Immediately after making this quotation, Mr. Cook made a present of the facts to the Spiritualists by suggesting that if instead of a fellow-student there had been present a disembodied spirit, a similar transmission of thought might have taken place between the spirit and the man. He took care, however, to give the matter the usual orthodox turn by inquiring whether facts like these did not suggest something of the method of inspiration. If one human spirit could thus communicate with another, why could not the Infinite Spirit give language as well as thought to men unspoken, to teach in his name?"

PROFESSOR ZOLLNER AND J. COOK.

DEAR HARBINGER,—I have had the pleasure of corresponding with the undaunted Professor, and even received a present of a little book from him only a few months before his passing over to the other side. The book is entitled "Intelligent Four-dimensional Beings; an Appeal to the German Students for the Course. 1879." It contains a description of the experiments he made with the medium Slade, and thoroughly argues the *pro* and *con;* also soundly whips the English as well as German doctors and professors for contemning and misrepresenting the Spiritual phenomena; and I am thinking that a cute Yankee soul-saver, at £40 per night, would justly be served the same at the courageous Professor's hands, for taking the liberty of using his honoured name in vain.

Dear sir, how does this fact harmonise with the assertion of the Rev. J. Cook, that he is in possession of papers which prove that Professor Zollner is indignant at the way Spiritualists use his name for the cause. The little book is accessible to every one for a shilling or two. Besides, the Professor published his experiments and convictions of the Spiritual phenomena to the world in his three large volumes, "Scientific Researches of the Nineteenth Century."

I feel it my duty, in memory of his name, to write this in his defence.

C. H. HARTMANN.

Toowoomba, Queensland.

THE MATERIALISATION SEANCE—QUALIFICATIONS OF ATTENDANTS.

THE *Banner of Light*, commenting on the qualifications of attendants at the Materialisation Circle in Melbourne says:—They have a system in conducting the Materialisation Séances of Mr. Spriggs, in Australia, that accounts in a great measure for the remarkable success attending them. All applications for attendance are placed in the hands of a committee, who make enquiry and become satisfied of the adaptability of the applicant before granting the request. This is shewing some common-sense in the matter. If a person wishes to join a school, to learn any of the higher branches of education, he is not told at once to pass in, but is obliged to undergo a thorough examination. To-day we have the astounding fact of beings called "dead" coming visibly to us, talking with us, identifying themselves by allusions to past events which only they and the persons they address are cognisant of. This truth is a *higher education* than any school or college on earth has to give to its pupils. Why, then, should there not be some qualification necessary for those who join a class to learn this lesson of an immortal life beyond the tomb—a lesson in comparison with which those of Harvard and Yale are as nothing? Why should the doors of the séance room be thrown wide open, and qualified or unqualified, wise or foolish, honest or dishonest, good, bad, and indifferent, go in as crowds flock to a circus or to the sea-shore in summer, to gratify, it may be, a prurient curiosity, or to fill up an idle hour? By the adoption of some such rule in regard to this form of spirit-manifestation, there would be by no means a shutting-out a knowledge of spiritual truth and its phenomena from the people, any more than the closing of college doors to those not qualified to enter, debars them from obtaining an education. In both cases there is enough to learn before that point is reached. Were it not so, the wisdom of such a rule might justly be brought into question. Step by step, in this as in all else, the gradual, even though slow advance, is the surest, the best, the most enduring. It is Nature's way, and Nature never errs.

The August numbers of the *Philosophical Inquirer* contain some excellent matter. "The essential qualification of a Freethinker," and some articles on Mesmerism, are particularly interesting. This journal is now printed entirely in English, and has improved in both quality and appearance.

PROFESSOR DENTON IN SYDNEY.

THE following speech by Professor Denton was given at the grand re-union of the Liberal Association in Sydney, August 29th, and was phonographically reported by Mr. L. E. Harcus for the *Harbinger of Light*.

Professor Denton said :—I congratulate you, the Liberal Association of New South Wales, on the presence of this large and intelligent audience assembled in the name of Freethought. It could not have been done a hundred years ago; and it is one of the evidences of the advance that we are making—keeping time with the grand progressive march of nature. It is but a few hundred years ago since they put Freethinkers in dungeons; it is not so very long ago since they tortured them with thumb-screws, put them on the rack, burned them with faggots, all in the name of God, in the name of religion. Thanks to the advance of Free thought no such thing is possible to-day. (Cheers.) The grand march that we have made in this direction we may well congratulate ourselves upon, and we may well be stimulated to help to make it possible in a few years for 5000 to meet in Sydney on an occasion like this, to help to make Freethought move still more rapidly forward, carrying blessings to humanity wherever it goes. (Applause.) Man without freedom is a fleecy cloud blown for ever by the wind; man without freedom is a thistle, down with no chance to take root upon the planet and grow. Give a devil freedom and there is no throne in heaven so high but he may mount it; make an angel a slave and heaven itself becomes an intolerable hell. Go cage an eagle and how mean and spiritless it looks; break its bars and it flies screaming to heaven; it is itself again, for liberty has freed it. Take a river and keep it from flowing and you have a stagnant pond for your pains, but give it freedom, it receives from a thousand sources and swells to a mighty river, and carries blessings wherever its waters flow. So with human beings; cage them, bind them down with old and barbarous notions of religion or of nature, and you have made them like the bird of the thunderer in the cage; but break the bars for their souls, give them that freedom which is the birthright of the human race, and to what may they not attain. For that purpose we are met to-night, and I feel sure that from this place shall go out an impetus in favour of Freethought that will bring blessings to this city of Sydney. They tell me that there are a good many Unitarians here, and I am glad to hear it. I congratulate you who belong to that form of faith on having the youngest form of the Christian religion with which I am acquainted. People sometimes boast of the antiquity of their religion, but a man might as well boast of the antiquity of his hat. If a man tells me that his hat is the oldest hat in town, I come to the conclusion that it is likely to be a "shocking bad hat." And it is the same with his religion; the very oldest religions on this planet to-day are the worst. Paganism is the oldest form of religious faith on the globe; Paganism whose bloody gods demanded the destruction of little babes. There stood the brazen image with fire in its interior, and little children were laid upon its brazen arms, and in their torture they moved about until they dropped into the fires that burned beneath —and this was in the name of religion, in the name of the olden gods, before the name of Freethought was born. With the birth of Freethought in a slight degree came an advance; Judaism was in advance of Paganism, but it is too old for us to-day; it had a god that blesses an old man named Abraham because he offered to sacrifice his own son to the blood-loving god that he worshipped; that god is too old for us to-day; it is too old even for the Jews of to-day, for though they keep up the old name, the old faith and the old practice are gone for ever. (Hear, hear.) There is not a Jew so ignorant or superstitious to-day as to desire to call back the old bloody sacrifices demanded in the time of Moses. Judaism to-day is only Jewish Unitarianism, and is advancing by rapid strides towards Freethought. Younger than Judaism is Christianity. Roman Catholicism is the oldest form of Christianity, and it is the poorest form, the lowest form, the most barbarous form, that seeks to regulate the human mind before it is old enough to know all that it is doing. (Loud cheers.) That mortgages the child to the devil of ignorance before it has the chance to use its intellect; because it knows that if it waited till the child was an intelligent man it would never receive the dogmas of this faith. Unitarianism is the youngest sister of the Christian churches, is bursting the bonds that held it to the old dogmas of the past, and is marching into the great temple of liberty that is being built up in the present. No, tell me not of the age of your religion; boast not of its antiquity in this age, when the mind of man is freer than ever it was in the history of the globe, when science is abroad with the seven-leagued boots of the ancient story upon her feet, stalking ahead with the pace of a giant; that is the religion we want, and the one that is going to bless us. We have a large army of Liberals here, of Freethinkers, and I congratulate them. You are on the right side, brothers, you are on the side of nature, of fact, and of science; you occupy a centre round which the whole manly thought of the world will revolve. (Applause.) Will revolve, not because you are there, but because the facts are there, because the grand truths of the universe are there. We are on the side that wins not because we put out our efforts, but because nature is working and has been working on that side in the great eternity of the past to bring this very thing into existence that we behold on this planet to-day. If we were disposed to boast of our antiquity I think we could present a tolerably fair antiquity for Freethought. I am inclined to think that our orthodox grandmother Eve was somewhat of a Freethinker. (Laughter.) I think she should have credit for being the first Freethinker in the world. She was told that if she ate of the tree of knowledge she would surely die—and that is what they have always told us. "If you read these books or hear these lectures you will die." We do not heed them and our grandmother Eve did not; she looked on the tree and on the fruit, and thought it would make people wise who ate it—a very wise opinion. (Hear, hear.) It looked well and it tasted well, and when she did eat of it it opened her eyes, and that is what is being done for us. The grandest eye-opener in all the world is knowledge, and if it has once opened a man's eyes, a hundred-parson power cannot close them again. That is exactly what happened in the case of our grandmother Eve; it opened her eyes and she was not satisfied; she started out on a missionary expedition, and that is what I want to induce you to do to-night, to open your neighbours' eyes. She was the most successful missionary there ever was, for she converted everybody and for all time. She induced her husband to eat, and when he ate his eyes were opened, and a blessed condition it was. If it had not been for that where should we have been to-night? Feeding upon haws and acorns, our only bed a mossy bank; we should have been naked and not have known it; but we are here to-night clothed, and well clothed, men and women, because grandmother Eve and grandfather Adam were wise enough to eat of the tree of knowledge. "But," says somebody, "they were turned out of the garden." Well, let me tell you it was only a briar patch compared with your Botanic Garden here, (Laughter and applause). We have infinitely better gardens to-day than ever they dreamed of in the olden time. (Hear, hear.) I am inclined to think that since then we have had a few Freethinkers on this planet; the noblest man and woman who have trod on the face of the planet. I claim Jesus, the reformer of Nazareth, as one of the Freethinkers of the world. (Cheers.) Hear him as he stands on the mountain and says "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil," and so on; daring to overthrow the authority of Moses, who like a mountain of lead had been crushing the nations down for centuries. I claim him as daring to appeal to the human soul "Why judge ye not for yourselves what is right?" That is the doctrine of the Freethinkers; that is what we want both man and woman to do; and as soon as they do this they stand on our platform by whatever name they may be called; and they are marching on the high road of progress. But I am sorry to say that Jesus was not always true to this; when he said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not

shall be damned." He departed from that grand highway of Freethought on which he originally stood. The man who does not allow himself to think freely and to be true to his thought is condemned already. (Cheers.) If a man comes to me and says "swallow that or you will be damned." I have just the same right to say the same to him. I have the same right to fulminate damnation as anyone else on this planet, and that is no right at all. (Hear, hear) If men violate the truth or the laws of their nature they have to suffer the consequences. This we must learn sooner or later, and must obey the laws of our being. We march ahead and do our best to lug humanity along to help us. We must be true to the nature that is within us, and when we take that position we are on the platform of the Freethinkers. The whole of humanity is destined to travel over the same ground, over the high road of progress. I am delighted to have the presence of these intelligent men and women round me to night; I augur from this glorious days for Sydney, brighter days than have yet dawned upon the city. More glorious days lie behind the Eastern hills than have yet ascended into the heavens, and brighter days are yet to come from the sun of science. There will be more Freethinkers on this planet than there have ever been at any time in the history of this globe; every day increases their number, and we are marching on the road of progress with an army that will do or die to get rid of the ignorant foes that may be brought in opposition to us. We are here to-night in what may as well be called God's house as any house in which men can be assembled in the city. The Infinite Spirit is the father of the whole human race, and no one is left outside in the cold. We are here to declare this doctrine of universal humanity, and to call all men and women into our platform and teach them that they are God's children just as much as those who claim to be members of the Christian church, and on the high road to the heaven of bliss in which they may professedly believe. That man only is true to his own soul who lives the life which his soul recommends; that is most truly God's child; that is the man who will receive the greatest satisfaction in this life, and be best prepared for the life that is to come. I am here talking to men who may have no faith what, ever in future existence; if true to themselves I have no single word of condemnation for them. Why should I if they have done their best to satisfy themselves on this important subject. For my own part I know that man lives after death, that death does not end us, that no manly endeavour is ever lost, that as we do the right in the life we now live so will be our reward; and there is no being on earth, in hell, or in heaven that can prevent the reward coming to the right doer, the man or woman who does the right deed. Thus we want to keep in mind, first, last, and always, and to be true to those impulses of the soul that are for ever speaking within the breast of the true man or woman. (Applause.) I augur from the presence of this audience here to-night, from the harmony that I find amongst the Freethinkers that are assembled here to-night, a more glorious time in the history of this city than has yet been experienced since the city came into existence. I have no fault to find with any man in any church who is true to himself, who dares to listen to the voice of God in his own soul; it was by listening to this voice that I came out of churches, took the platform on the outside, free from all bonds, with the determination to know the truth, if the truth could be found in the universe of God; and when I knew it, then to reveal the truth to my fellows. And for the man who stands on that platform, if any god finds fault with him we should have the best reasons for finding fault with that god—no such god is the true ruler of this universe. (Hear, hear.) Be true to yourself, live the life that commends itself to you, and if you dare to do this you will find a God within you who says "Well done, good and faithful servant;" and if the God within you says "well done," what are other gods to thee? Hell is when that God smites you for daring to violate his teaching, and heaven comes to you in order that you may enjoy its bliss, that bliss that comes to every true soul. When we have freed ourselves we must free our brothers. (Cheers.) There is at this moment a religious slavery in this country of yours, and it is time that the bonds were broken and the souls of men set for ever at liberty. Freedom for every man, freedom for every woman, and freedom for every child. One-seventh portion of our time we are robbed of, and it is time it was taken out of the hands of the priests and used for humanity (Cheers.) Every library ought to be opened on Sunday. (Applause.) Every hall, museum, and garden should be open on Sunday; the railroads should run on Sunday above all other days, and carry the people out where they might have a chance to meet nature face to face—(Cheers)—so that they might be able to draw ample instruction from nature's ample bosom; the poor man should have a chance to get out to see the broad ocean and the beautiful landscape. Show me a day when the sun ceases to shine, when the river ceases to flow, when the cow ceases to give milk, when the hens cease to lay their eggs, when nature ceases to work, and I will show you an idle day, a day that should be kept holy; but no such thing does exist. All days are man's and to be used for man's benefit. I have no objection to a day on which men abstain from hard labour or to two of them; but that day must be a day not for the priest, not for the holder of souls in the bondage of superstition; it must be a day for freeing men's souls, for liberating them; a day for enjoyment, for picnics, for instruction. If there is a day for theatres to be open it ought to be above all days Sunday. (Applause) If it is right for a theatre to be open on any day in the week it is right on Sunday. We must have a grand reform in this respect, let men have a chance upon this planet. (Cheers.) But you must not only be Freethinkers but free workers; you want a hall in this city and you must have it, and you are rich enough to get it; you have a host of God's houses here, have a man's house as well, have a house for humanity, a house for free men, a house where a man can be free to talk as I am talking to-night, where a man can speak his thought right out. And you must not rest until you get it. There is a good deal to be done; there are bonds to be broken, and a free hall will help to break these bonds. Men are slaves to a barbarous divinity, and an old devil that should have been put out of the way long ago, with all the scarecrows that have been made to hold down the souls of humanity. But men have been so scared that they have not dared to take a look at these scarecrows. Take a look and you will see that these gods are worse than States prison criminals, these barbarous divinities! They are too far behind the age for men and women to worship them in the days in which we live. We demand freedom, and we look on these great monsters that have been got up to terrify us, and when we look they vanish, and the Infinite Father and Mother of the human race take their place. If God, the Father of the human race, had ever made a hell in which to put his children and keep them, let me tell you the Infinite Mother would have put that hell out with her tears, and would have kissed them into goodness. But you have had only the Father God presented you, not the Mother God; let me present the Infinite Father and the Infinite Mother of the universe, and a religion that no man need blush to acknowledge, a religion that will make men wiser and better; that will make them free, free from the bondage of liquor and tobacco, from the bondage of ignorance, from the devil of superstition; a religion that will make men hearty, healthy, and noble, daring to look this great universe in the eye, and to live the life that commends itself to their own souls; and when men and women admit this the bliss of angels will be theirs, and the life that comes to the true soul at the moment of death will be theirs in the world to come. (Loud and continued applause).

THE *Gippsland Independent* of Sept. 7th, reports a discussion on Modern Spiritualism, held at the Mechanics' Institute, Narracan, the essay which formed the basis of it being read by Mr. J. Powell, J.P., of Moe. Very little solid argument was brought against Mr. Powell's position, and at the conclusion of the debate he consented to give a second essay in October.

WE observe that the *Banner of Light*, Boston, and *Light for All*, San Francisco, reproduce our leader of June on "Spiritualism in relation to Freethought."

SYDNEY LETTER.

THE Liberal Association of New South Wales held its first anniversary at the Sydney Masonic Hall, on the evening of August 29th. It took the form of a conversazione, and was very largely attended, about a thousand persons being present, though probably not more than half the number can be claimed as Free-thinkers.

The Hall was tastefully decorated, having the motto "Liberty but not License" skilfully worked in artificial flowers. The Hon. J. Bowie Wilson, who occupied the chair, opened the proceedings by outlining the history, of the association from its foundation by C. Bright Esq., up to the present.

Mr. Rankin then read a printed statement for the foundation of a Freethought Hall, which it is intended to float as a Company with a capital of £15,000 in £1 shares. The building will include a hall capable of seating 1,200 people, shops, meeting rooms, &c., while according to the prospectus it is to give an almost immediate return of 10 per cent on the outlay. With all my heart in the interests of real Freethought I wish it every success.

Mr. MacDonnell then followed with a most entertaining scientific display of "Geissler's Vacuum Tubes," which was highly appreciated. Then, after another song, Mr. Denton amidst great applause and cheering stepped forth for the event of the evening, and never since I last heard him lecture in your city have I had such an intellectual treat.

Speaking of Freethought brings to mind the motion that has been tabled in the House by Mr. Copeland to open the Art Gallery on Sundays, and which with Cook-like logic has been opposed by Sir Henry Parkes, who made great capital out of the fact that no petition had been presented in favor of it, while several lay before them against it. Too little time had been allowed to get up any petition, but as the debate was adjourned for a fortnight an opportunity was given that the "liberals" did not fail to seize, and up to the present we have over 30,000 bona fide signatures, making a continuous roll of over 450 yards in length. This in itself is a most encouraging and healthy sign of the times, and augurs well for the advance of Freethought in the colonies. Your Legislators might with advantage follow the lead of their Sydney brothers, and I feel sure you would not have any difficulty in doubling the number of signatures. For although far ahead of us in many respects, in the matter of Sunday observance you are far behind; thousands of people visiting our Museum and Public Library on Sundays—friends, you must look to your laurels, demand your rights, and open the doors of all your real God houses, even if by so doing you close all the sham ones.

Melbourne has lost, and Sydney has gained for a time an excellent medium. I speak of Mrs. Bamford, who arrived early this month, and has been doing good work in the glorious cause. During her stay she has given three semi-public, besides many private séances, the attendance being very good and the results most satisfactory, "In What will Spiritualism Benefit Mankind?" being the title of her address from the platform of the City Hall, which gave our friends an opportunity of judging of the excellence of her powers as a trance orator. Though her stay here must necessarily be limited, she returns with the satisfaction of knowing she has been the means of doing a great good.

It has been a want long felt by every Spiritualist of a good reliable medium. There are innumerable private circles, and the "ism" is progressing slowly, steadily, and surely, but still the investigator has always had the greatest difficulty in gaining admission to any, and thus this lady comes at a most opportune time, and as one who has greatly benefited by her visit I thank her muchly, hoping to have her once more among us ere very long. This reminds me that our Mr. Defries, an indefatigable worker, who has just returned from England, has under way a proposition to bring out one (Miss Woods) whom report speaks most favorably of as a materialisation medium, the gentleman in question being very sanguine of her success, and although I do not for one moment doubt his veracity we cannot be too careful, for within the last month a man who was believed to be a good medium for the same phenomenon has been proved to be nought but a trickster and a fraud.

BETA.

POPULAR SCIENCE PROPAGANDA, OF NAPLES.

IT gives us much pleasure to respond to the request of Signor Domenico Jaccarino, the illustrious and disinterested founder of the Popular Science Propaganda of Naples, to direct the attention of our readers and of the public at large to the arduous labours and high endeavours of this gentleman—one of nature's noblemen—in the vast field of popular education. We should consider ourselves as failing to do our duty towards the claims of humanity and universal brotherhood were we to pass by unnoticed the distinguished merits of Signor Domenico Jaccarino as a popular educator; for his task and that of the *Harbinger of Light* are so plainly identical that, in giving our fraternal support to his cause, we are only advocating and forwarding our own, which is that of spreading the light of truth to as many dwellers in darkness as the radiation of our small and humble orb is able to afford. But this our duty to help our brother in his noble cause of enlightening the masses, becomes tenfold more imperative to bring about those sweet fruits of popular enlightenment which is the principal aim of all men who have loved the people, and which also seems to be the main object of your "Popular Science Propaganda." We, therefore, wish you most cordially that measure of success of which both your cause and your personal efforts in that cause are so deserving; and may the torch in your hand be the means of restoring to your gifted nation the glory of that classical lore which has twice shone upon Italy, *Italia Antiqua*, and upon mediæval Italy.

A NEW and useful handbook of Mesmerism, by Dr. Williams, M.A., has just been published in Melbourne. It consists of a series of lectures on the Therapeutical and Phenomenal Value of Mesmerism, given by him at Brighton, England, as Professor of Psychological Science and honorary lecturer to the local Psychological Society. These lectures treat on the history of Mesmerism, its use and abuse; facts concerning it, the value of the fluid, various states induced and methods of inducing them, and some interisting accounts of phenomena. It will be found an excellent introductory book to this very interesting subject.

PROF. Denton's Sunday evening lectures, at the Bijou Theatre, for the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, are drawing full houses. His breadth of view is gaining for him many listeners who would not attend the discourses of a less tolerant lecturer. As an illustration of his impartiality, in his lecture upon "Sin in the Light of Science," speaking of the churches he said:—"If all the churches were pulled down to-day the people would begin to erect them again to-morrow, and with great propriety, because they are all doing a work in educating thepeople, and as the clergy becomes more intelligent the work of the churches will be still better. Even the Catholic Church, with which I have least sympathy, with its pictures and beautiful music, has a refining influence, and I believe the children of those attending it will be better because of such influence upon their parents." Tolerance such as this is a natural outcome of belief in Evolution.—*Echo* (N.Z.), Sept. 9, 1882.

MR. JOSEPH COOK is having a lively time of it at Brisbane. The Spiritualists, Freethinkers, and Swedenborgians have made common cause of it there, and are advertising and exposing his disingenuousness and self-contradictions. Mr. George Smith, our local agent, is active in the work. Two terse and appropriate letters of his appear in the *Telegraph* of the 20th and 22nd ult.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE

Harbinger of Light.

OCTOBER 1, 1882.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE Annual General Meeting of the above Association was held at the Temperance Hall, on Thursday, Sep. 13th, Mr. W. B. Bowley in the chair. The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the secretary read the following report:—

ANNUAL REPORT.

"Melbourne, 13th September, 1882.

"To the Members of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—Your committee have much pleasure in informing you that the past twelve months compare favourably with any previous year in point of activity displayed and in results obtained. We do not intend to imply that everything has gone in the most satisfactory manner possible; far from it, reverses have been met with, and opposition has been very strong indeed; but in spite of all this, or perhaps even on account of it, we have to record progress for the cause of Spiritualism. Notwithstanding the hope expressed in the report for 1881, Dr. Peebles has not favoured Australia with his presence; his visit must, therefore, be looked upon as a pleasure still to come. The most momentous events in the history of the past twelve months are the arrival of Mrs. Ada Foye in this city, and the public test séances given by that world-renowned medium. These séances have been reported at full length in the *Harbinger of Light*, of December 1st, 1881, and it will only be necessary to state here, that Mrs. Foye was so pleased with her reception in Melbourne, and the prospect of the good she can do here, that she has intimated her intention to return as soon as circumstances will permit her. We may, therefore, look forward to another visit of this highly useful and almost unique medium.

We next have to report the arrival of Mr. Thomas Walker, a few days after Mrs. Foye came here. Mr. Walker was enthusiastically received, the Association offering him a public welcome in the Horticultural Hall, on Nov. 16th of last year. Most of you are aware what course events have taken since then with regard to him, and it will not be necessary to dwell upon the painful circumstances which led to his separation from the Association when it became evident that he was no longer in harmony with the Spiritual-Philosophy, and even went so far as to say that he accounted for the acceptance of the occurrence of Spiritual phenomena by the ignorance of their observers.

In the *Harbinger of Light*, of July 1st, there appears an article headed "Mr. Thomas Walker," which gives a short and substantially correct review of all that happened since his arrival until he severed his connection with Spiritualism.

Your committee has now to draw your attention to an episode proving conclusively that the old spirit of persecution and oppression is still rampant in this *quasi* free country, and that the authorities will stifle freedom of speech upon social and religious matters whenever possible. This episode has become known under the name of the "Opera House Difficulty," and its leading feature was an attempt on the part of the Government to prevent the continuation of Sunday services of this Association, under the mean pretext that the bye-laws were evaded and money charged at the doors. The Directors of the Opera House were threatened with a cancelling of their license should they permit the continuance of these obnoxious practices. It is needless to go into details, to speak of the indignation meetings that were being held, and the short battle that was fought for the right of free speech; all that has been reported at full length, and you are doubtless familiar with it. All honour is due to those brave spirits who took up the gauntlet and compelled the Government to relax their severity to such an extent as to permit the continuance of the Sunday services.

After Mr. Walker had ceased to speak for the Association he continued his lectures on his own account, the Association not being prepared with another lecturer to follow him up until such time as Professor Denton, who was making a tour through New Zealand, should have returned to Melbourne.

About six weeks, however, before the latter gentleman was prepared to commence, a series of week-day lectures was inaugurated in the Masonic Hall, an experience meeting was also held, which pretty well filled up the gap between the termination of Mr. Walker's engagement and the beginning of Mr. Denton's.

On the 6th of August, Mr. Denton commenced a course of lectures at the Bijou Theatre, that being the most suitable place the committee could engage, and we need hardly say that he was a most unqualified success. He has since continued to draw immense audiences, many people having to be turned away for want of comfortable sitting accommodation.

The committee have written to Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, Mrs. Nellie Brigham, Prof. Buchanan, Dr. J. M. Peebles, Mr. W. J. Colville, Mr. J. Frank Baxter, Mr. J. C. Wright, and Mrs. E. L. Watson, with a view to induce some of these celebrated lecturers to visit Melbourne. A definite offer has been made to Mrs. Watson, a trance-speaker from San Francisco, whom Mr. Denton mentions in very high terms. No replies are to hand yet except from Dr. Peebles, who announces his intention to visit us some fifteen or eighteen months hence.

Your committee has also to draw your attention to the progress made by the Materialising circle, reports of which have regularly appeared in the *Harbinger of Light*. In order to mark their appreciation of the services rendered by Messrs. Spriggs and Smart, your committee elected those gentlemen honorary members of this Association, having power to vote at all meetings and elections, and being eligible to any office.

Your committee deeply regret the loss of the services of Mr. Alkemade, who has been your Secretary for several years, and to whose energetic efforts the present satisfactory state of the Association is mainly due. As a slight mark of their esteem the committee unanimously elected him as honorary member.

Mr. A. J. Hall was elected Secretary in his stead, and continued to act till June, when he was compelled to resign, having to leave Melbourne. His resignation was accepted with regret, and a vote of thanks was carried to acknowledge his past services. Mr. J. G. Hoogklimmer was elected in his place to act as Secretary, pro. tem. till the annual meeting.

The finances of the Association are unfortunately not in quite so flourishing a condition as might be desired, owing to the small returns of the Sunday evening service as compared with the expenses; already the balance-sheet shows a small debit balance, and besides, the coming liabilities are greater than the estimated income; hence some means must be devised to supplement the latter by donations and subscriptions, or otherwise, in order to enable your committee to carry on the work in hand for the progress of Spiritualism.

By order of Committee,

J. G. HOOGKLIMMER, HON. SEC.

The Report, as read, was adopted.

The Treasurer, Mr. Terry, then read the balance-sheet, shewing expenditure £590 7s. 0d., against receipts, £587 7s. 2½d, leaving £2 19s. 9½d. on the debit side. Amounts had since come to hand which covered this, but it would be absolutely necessary to raise a fund to meet current expenses and future contingencies. He read a letter received that day from Mr. H. A. Thompson, of Launceston, enclosing a cheque for £5. towards the Lecture Fund, and urging earnest Spiritualists to come forward, "not with words only, but with their purses, for what they knew to be the greatest cause of the day—a cause that had bestowed consolation and happiness on thousands of families, that had leavened, and is daily more leavening, the religious thought of the civilised world.

. . . . If ever cause was worth fighting for, surely this is." A discussion ensued which resulted in the adoption of a scheme to raise the necessary funds. About forty pounds were subscribed in the room, and cards on which to enter donations and guarantees distributed amongst the members.

The following were then elected office-bearers for the ensuing twelve months:—

President—Mr. H. J. Browne.
Vice Presidents—Messrs. John Ross, C. Johnston, and W. H. Bowley.
Hon. Secretary—Mr. J. G. Hoogklimmer.
Hon. Treasurer—W. H. Terry.

Committee—Messrs. Carson, Deakin, Moore, E. Gill, Bamford, Codling, Lang, Moore, Naylor, Rutherford, Watson, Unitt, Smart, Fielding; Mesdames Andrew and Johnston.

A vote of thanks to the retiring officers brought the meeting to a close.

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE INFINITE.

(From the Spanish of Balmes.)

TRANSLATED BY C. W. ROHNER, M.D., BENALLA.

SECOND CHAPTER.

THE LIGHT IN RIGHT.

AND although my words are yet obscure, I say it in the beginning, let the afflicted and heavy-laden take comfort in the assurance that the light was made for them; because they principally have accepted the light. There are many afflicted and miserable creatures in this world, because you only take delight in the individual liberty of your spirits. Therefore, you will admit it to be your duty, and also to your interest, to earn honestly a place in the infinite space of happiness above you, and you will understand that only by dint of great exertions will you obtain a place there.

Let us meditate a little while on the great things; let us scan and measure the horizon which is extended before our eyes. How immense is it! We see its surface, but fail to sound its depth. If perchance we attempt to penetrate to the verge of the farthest beyond until our dilated pupils tire, we shall fall into the abyss of a grand absurdity; because in trying to look beyond this farthest beyond, we make vain exertions in the presence of the magnificent theatre which we desired to survey, in the presence of the splendours of those gigantic suns which conceal themselves from our bold gaze, as if they intended to derange our reasoning faculties, in the presence of that innumerable multitude of brilliant stars which send their light to us from spaces of such distant depth that our weak sight can never reach them. After having contemplated the inexhaustible variety of forms, colours, outlines, and purity of the worlds in space, we are obliged to return fatigued and spent from our bold expedition, and to ask God's pardon for having attempted to penetrate beyond the assigned limits of our horizon into the bosom of the mysteries of the Infinite. We may, however, be allowed to lose ourselves within the extended space of our human horizon allotted by God for the contemplation and study of his creatures. We are permitted to elevate our spirits, without fear of erring, to our indestructible mansion in space, for thus only can we become perfectly assured of the reality of the Infinite, and thus only are we able duly to accomplish our solemn mission which consists in progress.

We have a right to investigate, and for that purpose were we created; let us exercise and strengthen our powers, both moral and intellectual, and their superiority will slowly become apparent; let us trace one circle of truth, and another of light, round our souls, so that they may feel strong enough by and by to serve as vessels in which their port of destination may swiftly be reached.

Tired and weary of seeking in this world that intelligence which I felt was shining beyond the narrow limits of this earth, I rose one day, in a blessed hour, my spirit made for the celestial regions, and then disclosed itself to my astonished gaze the boundless panorama of the glory which had been foreshadowed to me, and I looked down upon all men and upon myself with pity and compassion. What dread and astonishment seized me when I saw the heartless and brainless ignorance in which men were living, and under the pressure of which I had been so faithless and ungrateful to God in my earthly career! How immense and all-powerful appeared God to me then; how little and miserable appeared the race to which I belonged! From the chaos of darkness I proceeded to receive the irradiating light which God, in his mercy, had presented to me; henceforth I comprehended the unfortunate and woeful utopia, called human pride, which considers itself happy in the midst of its dense ignorance. To seek the light in the right of man—still how little does he persist in obtaining it? My ambition increased as I contemplated the grandeur of the works of God; and, seeking to find the philosophy of God's works, which had been the aim of my whole life on earth, I met it there in its unvarying order, in its infinite extent, and in its overwhelming, grand appearance, so grand indeed I found this philosophy to be that, losing myself in it, I comprehended that after a little while I would be able to bring my study to a conclusion, for I knew to study was a natural necessity for man, and that studious souls would never get tired of studying.

The worlds float in space as the grains of sand of the shore float in the ocean wave.

I stopped before the immensity of the grandeur of these worlds; I, considered a wise man amongst you on earth, scarcely value myself as an imperceptible atom in my vain attempt to make a show in the whirling crowd of those countless thousands of luminous globes amongst which I am regarded as a drop of water trying to cover the whole face of the earth with its dew.

How swift is my mode of progression, how illuminated are my ideas and thoughts, how free is my spirit, with what pleasure do I meet in this vast space, liberated from that matter which kept me a close prisoner on earth! I feel sad when I think that I must again return to earth, because it is necessary to conquer the life of the spirit by work done here below, which if properly and patiently performed, will lift up the soul of man to these elevated heights of Spiritual existence. What and how many proofs of kindness and goodness have I not already received from God for the troubles and trifling trials experienced by me in the past!

The life in space is the truly happy life; but to obtain it eternally it is necessary to work hard. I could not tell you how many worlds I have visited; I have entered into some worlds so little that, as soon as I tried to assume form in them, I feel fatigued. Some worlds are still in the act of formation; in them matter emerges and shapes itself in a still violent manner, and its mode of gradual development is perfectly sensible and patent.

The men in these new worlds and mansions are true criminals; evil and ignorance is a pleasure to them; they have not discovered the reality involved in ideas; the violence of their passions is extreme; matter there preponderates over spirit—all nature is gross and rude; there are neither flowers nor birds in those recently-formed worlds; their mode of conversation consists in cries and noisy clamour; the inhabitants of these still imperfect globes have not yet begun to progress, and are excessively addicted to animalism and the grossest sensual pleasures.

I have now detached myself from those incomplete worlds, and am flying away from them with rapidity.

You will readily believe me that it was not from egotistical motives that I went to visit those worlds, but moved by sympathy and pity for their backward condition; still, my labours were in vain, I could do nothing for them; both their physical and moral degradation was so dense that the few rays of luminous ideas which I directed towards their souls were unable to penetrate them, because they could not yet comprehend them; to continue teaching them the first principles of light before they heard of the word "light," would have been futile, and the light shown to them would only have dazzled their eyes without producing any beneficial

effects. Those spirits will have to be taught first by some spirits just a little superior to themselves, but such as not to offend their still weak sight; by spirits, in fact, who will come from other more advanced planets, either for the purpose of expiating their own sins by teaching their inferiors, or as high-souled voluntary missionaries, eager to initiate them into the profound mysteries of the progress of God's laws and ideas; and thus only will these backward spirits be eventually stirred up and roused from their lethargic slumber. In the meantime, however, they will make a little progress by themselves, for the march of progress goes on silently throughout infinity and eternity. When I descend upon your world I come in contact with a mental condition certainly superior to the one I have just described to you, but still sufficiently backward and unhappy, on account of the gross vices from which you suffer so much, for me to perceive it and to pity you for it. Whilst matter oppresses matter, matter will and must suffer, and so long as spirit does not elevate spirit, spirit cannot enjoy its liberty and freedom of action.

Without attempting to penetrate into these recondite ideas which begin to germinate in your bosoms, not wishing to circumscribe the limits of progress by a picture of your misery and wretchedness, I must say that you, by not loving your neighbour as you love yourselves, remain still sufficiently blind and ignorant to require much amendment.

Place your feet first on the first step of the ladder in order to reach the last steps; enlarge the sphere of your thought, for this is the only thing which will survive the last breath of your life on earth; take nature for your model; strive to imitate the love of the dove, the strength of the lion without its ferocity, permeate yourselves with the fragrance of the flowers, so that you may become like flowers, before it is too late; their fragrance will liberate your souls, and then they will enter heaven without fear or trembling, for although a hurricane now shakes your earthly reed of a body, that hurricane will be unable hereafter to deprive the flower of your souls of its fragrance.

Man's understanding will thenceforward be perfect, and he will suffer less in order to enjoy more; the joys of the spirit, which are the only true joys, will have taken the place of the material joys, which are in the end only productive of loathing and disgust.

Intelligence, having conquered and banished ignorance, will then unfurl its victorious flag; men will then be men without being dreamers and visionaries; the law under which man will live will be the law of God only, and wars will have been brought to an end; the ocean will always remain tranquil; harvests of plenty will fill the lands of man; the surrounding air will always be fresh and cool, for there will be no longer winter, summer, or autumn; spring will be the only season then reigning on your earth. Immense will be the strides of progress; man will no more bring accusations against man, but man will love man with that eternal love which God has poured out over the blessed with such prodigality; everything hurtful and injurious will have disappeared from the face of your earth; all diseases and infirmities will be of a mild character; there will no longer be any fear of death; extensive scientific discoveries and researches will have taught mankind that their planet contains many until now unknown substances which will promote the social progress and happiness of the human species and of the earth at large. Numerous labourers in the field of science will continue their profound investigations with a view to making still further and more advanced discoveries, and the wider the horizon of knowledge spreads out before the eyes of man, the more will his joy and happiness increase. All men will then believe in the pre-existence of the human soul, and will strive to lay up treasures for the soul instead of for the body, as now.

All will then have learnt to admire and love God in His works; no one will then dare to deny His existence; the world will, in fact, present more of a divine than merely human aspect and character.

Many worlds have I thus seen which have nearly arrived at the final apogee of their greatness; their progress is truly enviable, and tempting is the happy lot of their inhabitants; they live the true life of progress, and by constantly advancing they will shortly reach a state of perfection of which we have no idea at present. In a little while they will have cast off the fetters of matter and the bonds of mortality, when they will rise and float eternally through infinite space, which is the life promised to all human beings by the voice of all nature and nature's God.

Benalla, Aug. 8th, 1882.

REMINISCENCES.

By H. V. S.

III.

Prompted by the single motive already related, I continued my study of the Scriptures, and in a desponding condition of mind still breathed my humble prayer to God for light that would enable me to fulfil the purposes of my existence in accordance with His holy will, and the devil (as I believed) still continued to assail me. The creed with which my brain had in infancy and youth been, all but indelibly, branded required me to believe that a statement, or doctrine, *was true*, and that the very opposite *was true also*, if both were found in the Bible; to believe that deeds which were revolting to the "natural mind" were not dreadful crimes when done, as recorded in the Bible, in obedience to the will or command of God, but righteous acts. I must believe this or face the awful alternative, and attribute unrighteousness to God.

Thoughtfully and prayerfully reading the Bible from beginning to end, instead of having resolved my doubts, had multiplied them immeasurably, and "made confusion worse confounded." As yet there was no rent in the dismal cloud that overshadowed my life through which a ray of light could reach me.

Vain endeavours to grasp what my creed and the Bible together required me to believe had bewildered and oppressed me. A weary conflict ensued, during which the frail wreck of my former faith was continually thumping against the hard rock of reason.

I now seldom read "God's holy word," but frequently pondered over the many passages of that book which my memory had retained. I well remember thinking God possibly may not know that I am sorely tried by the temptations of the evil one, and have need of his help (I could not then see that these temptations were bringing me what I had earnestly and long prayed for). It is true "the eye of the Lord is in every place," and that all things are known to him; but it is also true that He did not know where Adam was in the garden of Eden, nor who told Adam that he was naked, nor if he (Adam) had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. I remembered that "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had builded," that "the Lord said because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know;" that "the Lord said. . . . I am come down to deliver them" (the Israelites) "out of the hand of the Egyptians." The Bible being the word of God all this must be true, and therefore I may have been overlooked. I had regarded even a momentary thought of there being contradictions in God's holy word as sinful, and to reconcile the texts I have quoted with others, and with my conception of the attributes of the Creator, I was driven to the conclusion that God must be omniscient and not omniscient, omnipresent and not omnipresent, omnipotent and not omnipotent, according to His sovereign will.

The above speculations will appear very absurd to those who have never been in the toils which I have

attempted to describe, but to those who have they will appear in a very different light; those whose minds have been enslaved from the very dawn of conscious existence have grown to their manacles, and as it is with men who have been long confined in dungeons, the light at first is blinding to them, and they dread coming out of the darkness with which they have so long been associated.

At length, in fear and trembling, I turned again to the Bible, resolved to use my reason and judgment as freely as I would in the study of any other book; and still I believe this resolve was tinctured with the foregone conclusion that the result, if I was making a right use of my reasoning powers, would be the re-establishment of my former faith upon a solid foundation. However, remembering the words of Christ "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right;" the Apostle Paul's enjoinment "prove all things," and "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and other texts, I felt that I was justified in concluding that the Bible sanctioned the testing of "spiritual things" by the rules of logic, and my resolve remained unshaken.

Now that I have begun to see that I must be guided by the light that was in me instead of believing doctrines in the abstract, I tried the effect of their practical application. The question before my mind was what can I believe, and what can I do without violating my reason and conscience. Here predestination and election confronted me; if (as I long believed) God "hath saved us (me) and called us (me) with a holy calling . . . . which was given us (me) in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2nd Timothy, 1, 9). "He (God) hath chosen us (me) in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the" (Ephesians, 1, 2) be so, then everything was completely arranged in the remote past, and their is nothing left for me either to believe or do. The doctrine of election "went by the board" as incompatible with man's responsibility, and limiting the power of the deity to the creation of puppets.

Well! what am I to believe, and what am I to do now that I have reached the conclusion that I must work out my own salvation? (I will try to avoid boring the reader with texts). I read "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation." "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Again, in regard to believing, "All that believe are justified from all things." "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Now I felt that I had truly and honestly repented of every mis-spoken word, and of every word inadvertently spoken which I thought might be unpleasing to a fellow creature, as well as for greater sins; and I had believed so unquestionably that I was horror-struck when I discovered that my belief had no foundation that would endure the test of human reason. But I might have spared myself this repenting and believing, for I read "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," and "if we believe not, He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself."

Now, I not unnaturally further investigated "the great dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan," that had given me so much trouble. He makes his first appearance as "a beast of the field," then condemned by God to go upon his belly, and eat dust "all the days of his life." Again and again he is found in company with the sons of God, and in the Divine presence. How he managed to get away from the earth on his belly is a puzzle; and I suppose took a little dust with him. Then he is described a roaring lion; and heaven is his dwelling place at this moment unless we are to believe that the "seventh trumpet" has been sounded. I could no longer believe in the existence of this incongruous monster, so the "great dragon" went overboard. Relieved from this incubus I made better sailing on the ocean of life in "keeping my course." I was impelled to search the Bible with the object of acquiring a reasonable conception of the God I had so long ignorantly worshipped. "Courage mounteth with occasion;" my courage had mounted, but I must leave the record for another number.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA A REALITY.*

UNDER the above caption Mr. Smith has written a very useful pamphlet, the careful perusal of which cannot fail to impress any unprejudiced person that the time has gone by for pooh-poohing, or denying the occurrence of what is commonly called Spiritual Phenomena.

Prefacing his work with a quotation from the late W. M. Thackeray who, when speaking with some scientific friends who had been expressing their incredulity and disbelief said, "It is all very well for you who have never witnessed Spiritual manifestations to talk as you do, but had you seen what I have witnessed you would hold a different opinion," he points out the uniform action of prejudice in obstructing every new truth which men in advance of their fellows have endeavoured to unfold for the benefit of humanity, and Spiritualism as no exception to the rule; it has to fight its way against popular prejudice, and by its inherent truth overcome one by one the obstructions which its opponents are constantly putting in its path.

For authority as to its pretentions the author gives a list of one hundred and seventy men of repute in science, philosophy, medicine, politics, literature, art, law, and social rank who, after investigating modern Phenomena, have become convinced of its reality. He quotes from many of these to illustrate their methods of investigation, and the profound impression of the facts elicited upon their minds. The testimony of eminent prestidigitateurs as to the discrete nature of Spiritual phenomena is also given; and the work concludes with a philosophical summary showing the harmony of the matter with science and the most advanced religious thought of the age.

For a comparatively young beginner in the literary field Mr. Smith deserves commendation for the composition, construction, and general tone of his work, which is a veritable "multum in parvo," as without undue terseness he has compressed into 34 pages the pith of many volumes, and sufficient to prove (as far as authority and testimony can do), his position. Although the pamphlet is published in Brisbane, and written to meet local requirements, it is equally appropriate to many in this colony, who in spite of the lengthened period the subject has been before the Victorian public, are still in the dark as to the status of Spiritualistic phenomena.

ORGANIC MAGNETISM.†

THIS book is a valuable addition to the library of Mesmeric works published during the past century, as it contains more practical instruction in the various forms of Magnetising than any one volume that has preceded it. The author, Miss C. L. Hunt, has made Mesmerism a study for many years, and added to a large practical experience all that could be gleaned from every published work on the subject, including some of the private instructions of the late Baron du Potet. Whilst all Magnetisers agree that the eyes and hands are the directing points of the magnetic aura, and the will the directing power, almost every one differs in the method of procedure in the transmission of the fluid to the subject, whether for curative or other purposes; and the author, whilst presenting her own method, gives at the same time a concise and comprehensible description of the processes adopted by some of the most successful Magnetisers who have preceded her. The book is divided into eleven chapters, which treat upon the nature of Magnetism, the development of the power, process for public and private practice, healing, the development of sensitives, the dangers attending some forms of trance, curiosities in magnetism, &c.

The price at which the book is published is high, but to anyone who intends to devote themselves to the study and application of Magnetism, it is worth all the money. It is neither intended nor adapted for a popular handbook, but rather for those who having read up in the philosophy of Magnetism are desirous of cultivating and utilising their powers in that direction.

* Reality of Spiritual Phenomena; an Answer to the Theories of Fraud, Delusion, and Conjuring as applied to the Phenomena called Spiritual; by George Smith, F.T.S. S. Smith and Co. Brisbane, 1882.

† Private Instructions in the Science and Art of Organic Magnetism; by Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt. London, 1882.

THE NEW RELIGION.

By William Denton.

Man is as naturally religious as he is naturally musical. Being musical he makes and plays upon harps, organs, pianos, violins; he forms bands and orchestras; he sings, and makes and performs oratorios and operas. Being religious he builds churches, chapels, and temples; he makes prayers and writes hymns and bibles. The bowed head, the bended knee, the officiating priest, the reverential tone, and solemn anthem, are the offspring of man's religious nature, and are as natural as the growth of an acorn upon an oak.

It has been said that priests made religion in order to make money out of it. It might as well be said that musicians made music, for the same reason, and bakers the appetite for bread, that they might make money by its sale. Religion as naturally springs from man's mental condition as art or poetry. Men were religious many thousand years before the first line of the Bible was written, and they will be ages after it has ceased to be regarded as God's word, by every human soul.

Being natural, religion is subject to the law of growth. We do not expect to find the highest expressions of art in the caves of Great Britain and Europe, where our rude forefathers dwelt, long before history was born. Art grew from the rudest beginnings—a scratch upon a bone, to the soul that looks into ours from canvas and the all but breathing statue. We do not go back to a Pharaonic tomb to look for a model plough; the plough of that time was only a crooked stick; and since then it has grown to the perfection of our modern overturners. We never dream of finding the best ideas on geography, physiology, astronomy, and chemistry, in documents that are thousands of years old; why should we expect the best ideas on religion to be in books that were written from one to three thousand years ago? The expectation is unreasonable. No one thinks of going back to the geography of a thousand years ago; what teacher would be considered fit for his office who should teach his scholars geography out of an atlas four hundred years old? Such an atlas had upon it no United States, no Canada, in fact no North and South America, for the continent was then unknown; no West Indies; Australia was not upon it, for it was undiscovered; and New Zealand was absent, for the same reason. The world was not known to be round, though some supposed it to be, and no atlas of that time gives the two hemispheres of our planet, or represents it as a globe. We make new atlases and new geographies, as we obtain new geographical facts, embodying in the mall that is true in the old, but adding to them all that more recent discoveries have revealed.

What we never dream of doing in science, we are constantly doing in religion. We have taken books that were written from three thousand to seventeen hundred years ago, and made them absolute authorities in religion. We have declared these books to be infallible; have represented them as divine, containing all that is necessary for man to know to secure happiness in this life and endless bliss in another, and the consequence is that we are behind in religious matters a thousand years as compared with our position in science and mechanics; and as long as we look to the past for perfection in religion—as unreasonable as to look for the most perfect men in the tertiary age—we shall be religious babes, rocked in the cradle of ignorance, and scared by the bugbears that our ignorant nurses call up to stifle our infant cries.

Religion being natural, and subject to the law of growth, the older any religion is, as a rule, the greater and the more numerous are its imperfections. The oldest religions of Syria with which we are acquainted were brutal as the people that made them. The altar of Moloch, the fire-god of the Ammonites, reeked with blood: "children were sacrificed and burned in the fire to him, while trumpets and flutes drowned their screams, and the mothers looked on and were bound to restrain their tears." Judaism, a religion made by the Israelites, at a more recent time, was angelic as compared with this. Yet it had its brutal and disgusting rite of circumcision, its beastly sacrifices and blood-sprinklings. Christianity, established by more modern Jews, discards the burden of ceremonies, breaks down the exclusiveness of Mosaism, and gives us a religion in many respects in advance of its predecessor, yet sadly defective. Roman Catholicism is the oldest form of Christian faith now existing, and it is decidedly the worst. Its services are conducted very largely in a dead language, that not one in a hundred of its hearers understand. While the church itself does its best to stifle thought and shackle the human mind, keeping up superstitions and delusions that but for its great influence had long since been outgrown. Unitarianism and Universalism are two of the youngest forms of Christian faith, and they are decidedly the best; their members are generally intelligent, and they seek to increase the intelligence of mankind; while their ideas of God and future life breathe a spirit of benevolence such as should be manifested by every religion.

But these forms of religion cling to the Bible: their professors regard Jesus as a model for universal humanity, and find a warrant for their existence, not in a God that inspires the human soul now, but in the record of that inspiration to other men thousands of years ago. Why should men cling to the ideas of Moses, when Jews more intelligent and more moral walk our streets every day? Why should Jesus, the product of Palestine, nearly nineteen centuries ago, be made the model for all men in our age, which far surpasses his in almost every respect? We have adandoned the old flail and the old plough; the day of spinning-wheels and tinder-boxes is over; the days of even gas are numbered; we are not satisfied with the scientific books of even a hundred years ago, and we can no longer worship at the shrine of dead gods, and be satisfied with religions made by semi-barbarians; for we are now establishing a religion as much superior to the old as a locomotive is to an ox-team, as a spinning frame is to a spinning jenny. A new relgious era is dawning upon the world, the brightest that our planet has seen since the day when our mother Nature was able to say, I have made a man.

Out of the demonstrated facts of spirit-existence and communion has grown, within forty years, a religion which, like the sun, has visited all lands, melted the icy fetters of an old and barbarous theology, and has awakened millions of chilled souls to life and happiness in its glory beams; and I purpose to present some of the features of this new religion, which, in my opinion, is destined to incorporate whatever is worthy in all other religions into its own glorious temple, in which universal humanity shall meet and adore.

Modern Spiritualism began with the establishment of regular communication with the spirit-world. For ages men had peered into the dark gulf that separates us from the land of souls, but with streaming eyes were compelled to confess that there was nothing to be seen; over it lay the dark shadow of death. A few, a favoured few, declared that they had caught glimpses of a realm beyond; they had seen the tops of its evergreen mountains, and faint echoes of the songs of the blest had fallen upon their ears; but when others stood upon the same spot, and looked and listened, naught was to be seen but the darkest of clouds, nothing to be heard but the beating of their doubting hearts.

On the other side millions of attempts had been made to span with a bridge the gulf that lay between heaven and earth, but the earthly end of it for the want of intelligent labourers could never be finished. A few years ago the work was done, the key-stone was placed, and since then hosts of the celestials have crossed, and brought to us messages of love from the departed that have dispelled the gloom of death, cheered the mourner, and opened windows which have admitted sunshine to millions of darkened souls. Their ministrations have established a religion which has already millions of believers, among whom are some of the most intellectual and moral people that our planet has produced, with their members daily increasing; and it has already produced a greater revolution in theology than was ever before produced in the same space of time.

The religion thus established is the most original of all religions. We find a large portion of Judaism in the

mythology of the Phœnicians and the Babylonians; its Jehovah is but the sun-god of previous Canaanitish tribes; its "I am that I am" is the Nuk-Pu-Nuk, I am what I am, found in the Book of the Dead deposited in the Egyptian tombs more than a thousand years before Moses was born. Its decalogue was nearly all in the mouths of the Egyptians hundreds of years before the Israelites had being, and its rite of circumcision was common in Egypt in the fourth dynasty, and was therefore in use thousands of years before it was accepted and perpetuated by the Jews.

Christianity is the child of Judaism, and has many of the distinctive features of its parents. Jehovah is the God of Jesus, as He was the God of Moses and Joshua; the holy day of Christianity is only a poor copy of the Jewish Sabbath; the vicarious atonement, the old Jewish sacrifice in a novel form, while it endorses and perpetuates many of the absurdities of the religion that went before it and gave it birth. Mohamedanism has scarcely an original element in its composition; it is a mixture of Paganism, Christianity, and Judaism, blended by the genius of Mohamed into a system that has commanded the faith, first and last, of thousands of millions of souls. Mormonism accepts the follies of Judaism and Christianity, and only adds to them greater follies of its own.

All the forms of religion that have sprung up in the Christian world within the last eighteen hundred years have been but modifications of Christianity or pre-existing Paganism; they have been branches of the old tree, and fed by its sap. Roman Catholicism is old Roman Paganism, with a thin veneer of Christianity. Its Virgin Mary, the mother of God, is but the old Isis, born in Egypt and adopted by Rome; and she holds the infant Jesus in Roman churches to-day, as Isis held the infant Horus in the Egyptian temples thousands of years before Jesus was born. The supreme pontiff, the pope, is but the *pontifex maximus*, or chief of the old Pagan priests which ruled in matters religious in Rome hundreds of years before the keys of heaven and hell were placed in the hands of the swearing Galilean fisherman. Episcopalianism is Roman Catholicism stripped of some of its Pagan vestments, and adapted to the tastes of the English people. Methodism is Episcopalianism popularised, and Universalism is "Methodism with its hell left out."

But Spiritualism is a religion that, for the first time in eighteen hundred years at least, is original, that is, not a sprout from some dying tree. It bows before "Jehovah's awful throne" no more than it does before that of Jupiter Olympus; it accepts of Jesus as a Saviour and final judge no more than it does Osiris, the Egyptian saviour and judge; it has no more faith in the Christian hell than it has in the Greek Tartarus; its heaven is neither Jewish nor Christian, but rational and natural. It sprinkles no babies, it dips no converts, it consecrates no priests, it believes in no devils, it preaches no hopeless hells, it has no sacred books nor sacred days, it teaches no Trinity and it finds no need of an Atonement; it has severed completely its connection with the old, and started anew.

To show you how radically distinct from the old its doctrine is, I present to you a communication professedly from the spirit of Martha W. Allen, given at Utica, New York, through the mediumship of Carrie S. Twing:—

"I have tried so often to reach my friends, and if in some way this can be brought about and placed before Jefferson Allen, of Utica, N. Y., who is my father, I shall feel repaid for all the efforts I have made in that direction.

Father! don't call me dead; mother and I watch the old home with never-failing interest, and even the beauties of heaven cannot wean us from the lonely-hearted in your life. It was not hard to die, and mother was glad when I was freed from my old body.

What a change has come over me. I have the same kind of body I had on earth, with the blemishes left off. It is tangible to me, yet to you there it would be light as air. I look on mountains high and covered with verdure, on rivers that seem like silver, on fields animate with animal life. Don't start and say this cannot be; for what kind of a heaven would it be, all people, no birds, no creatures of any kind? I hear the song of birds, the laugh of the merry; and alas! I see some sad faces, because of life's worse than wasted hours; but all tends upward toward a happiness without flaw, because we have learned to know ourselves.

But no matter how much engaged, or how happy, there is always before us a way that we can look at our earth-friends and know their thoughts, and struggle for their good.

Live there as long as you can; learn all you can in the physical, for that which cripples the body often cripples the mind; and when the young come over here, it is not a stepping into perfection, but to begin here where you left off there, thus taking step by step the journey of eternity.

But I am satisfied, even though I came here young, for I can learn more readily here the truths that make the soul blessed.

The angels around me will bring out more of the angel within me, and I shall grow up into a still more divine atmosphere. Oh father, oh dear ones all! waste no more time, but learn blessed truths."

Whence came such a common-sense, rational, natural view of heaven as this communication gives? Our mediums were nearly all educated in the schools of Christian orthodoxy; the heaven in which they were taught to believe was the heaven of the Bible and of the religious sects around us; but the heaven that spirits through them reveal to us is as distinct from that as the story of creation in Genesis is from that of geology. In the heaven they describe there is no white-haired Son of Man, girt with a golden girdle, with eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like fine brass. The spirits who have communicated with us tell us of no seven spirits of God; they have seen no twenty-four elders in white raiment, with crowns of gold on their heads; no throne of God with six winged beasts full of eyes round about it, and seven lamps burning before it.

How comes it that the heaven of Spiritualism is so different from the heaven of orthodoxy? It arises from the same cause that the earth of science is so different from the earth of ancient fancy. Before astronomy, geography, and geology were born, this was a strange world; it had four corners, it rested upon pillars; above it was a firmament, and an ocean of water above that to supply the rain, which came down through windows. There was an ocean also under the earth, peopled with water monsters: dragons flew through the air, and gorgons of terrific aspect wandered over the earth; the basilisk slew men by a single glance of its eye, and the phœnix rose triumphant from its ashes. There were races of men with one eye in the centre of the forehead, and others no larger than cranes, but furnished with tails like monkeys.

All these are gone, for science has revealed the actual state of our planet, and the simplicity and beauty of nature have taken the place of the wild fancies born of ignorance. Science has taken miracle out of the earth, Spiritualism has taken miracle out of heaven. The many-winged beasts are gone, the visible God and His radiant throne have departed; the cherubim and seraphim can no more be found than the phœnix and the basilisk. Men, women, and children are there, with natural language that they learned on earth, and thoughts of the old home and the loved ones they left behind, are in their souls.

Heaven has been rebuilt and refurnished within thirty years. Its inhabitants then walked through golden streets, in blood-washed garments, played on golden harps, and by way of variety, looked over the shining wall and watched the wretches who had been consigned to the infernal pit, and then looked to the great white throne and sang hallelujah to God and the Lamb, who had redeemed them and admitted them to a seat in his parlour of bliss. In Revelation we read that the heavens departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together; so has departed the old heaven, and a new heaven has taken its place.

> Not far away in some distant sphere
> Are those we loved, but around us here;
> Not idly bowing before a throne
> With hearts as hard as Lydian stone;

Not caring a tittle who may go
To join the lost in the realms of woe;
But here to cherish, to love, to bless,
To bind the heart in its sore distress;
To lift the load by the weary borne,
And point dark souls to the coming morn.

There is little satisfaction, however, in knowing that our religion is original unless we also know that it is true. Here is another important respect in which Spiritualism surpasses all other forms of religion; its foundation can be verified.

The foundation of Judaism is the law, said to have been given by Jehovah on Mount Sinai. What is the evidence of the truth of this foundation of Judaism? The statement of an ancient document, written by we know not whom, and written we know not when.

"But Moses and Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders saw the God of Israel." But all the evidence of this is the statement of that unknown writer. It is evident that Jesus did not believe the story, if he is correctly reported, for he declares, "No man hath seen God at any time;" nor did Paul believe it, for he also states, "No man hath seen Him, and no man can see Him." Who could believe any man who should come down from a mountain and say he had seen the God of Israel? If seventy-four men, even, should say they saw Him, we might suppose they saw something which they believed to be the God of Israel, but not one intelligent man in ten thousand could believe they saw any such being; and what reason have we to think that men three thousand years ago saw the God of Israel, when the statement of an unknown writer is that alone by which it can be established?

There is no possibility of veritying it now. Men see nothing of the kind to-day; they have seen nothing of the sort for thousands of years. If we could see the God of Israel on Mount Etna or Vesuvius, we might believe that He was seen on Mount Sinai. But the more childish faith a man has, and the less active his reason is, and the better Jew he makes; yes, and Christian also, for Christianity can no more be verified than Judaism.

Christianity depends upon the resurrection of Jesus from the dead; but no man knows that he was dead before his supposed resurrection; and if he was alive, with "flesh and bones," after his crucifixion, we may be sure that the crucifixion did not extinguish life. We only have the conflicting accounts of two, or at the most three, who claim to have seen him after the resurrection; and if we accept one of these accounts, we are compelled to reject the others, for human ingenuity is unable to reconcile them. There is no verification of Christianity possible to-day, and if a man could present no better evidence for belief in the resurrection of an individual of the present time, everybody would laugh him to scorn. Our forefathers who first accepted Christianity were neither scientific nor critical; and I do not believe that the person can be found who was scientific and generally intelligent, and who had arrived to manhood without a belief in Christianity, who ever became a believer in its supernatural claims.

Joseph Smith tells us that he received a revelation from an angel, on golden plates, which were seen by eleven persons, who have left us their testimony. But alas! they never saw the angel, the golden plates have disappeared; no critic ever had a peep at them, and Mormonism must be received on trust. Like Christianity, it says, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed."

Spiritualism is the only religion whose foundation can be verified. The first observers told their artless story—"Spirits rapped, and we thus learned of their presence." Since then they have rapped millions of times, and countless multitudes have received messages from them by which they have been able to know that the spirits were their departed friends, and many are still receiving them. Spirits have written and are writing, and many are the messages that I have received from them; they have spoken and are still speaking; they have materialised in human form, and they continue to do so; and are giving, in scores of ways, evidence of their existence and the interest they have in our welfare.

Spiritualism is a living religion; it does not say spirits did exist and appear to men two thousand years ago, but they exist now; they make their presence known daily, hourly, not to a favoured few, who climb a mountain, and tell the crowd to beware of following them, but to millions, not disdaining the poorest and the vilest. Suppose the raps had come to the Fox family two hundred years ago, and to no one else. Suppose that after a short time they had never been heard again, nor any other phenomena appeared that demonstrated the existence of Spiritual beings, where would Spiritualism have been to-day? Instead of having millions of believers, and they increasing daily, it would, if in existence at all, have been confined to a handful of obscure believers, who might have secretly cherished their faith, but could never have spread it among intelligent people.

Galileo saw the moons of Jupiter through his one inch telescope, the first time they were ever seen by mortal eye. Suppose that no one since, though searching the heavens with much better instruments, had been able to perceive them, would his statement with regard to them have been received as a scientific truth? Science is based upon living fact, fact that can be verified by the observations and experiences of the living, and the religion that will command the respect of intelligent people must resemble it in this respect.

Spiritualism is a live religion, rapping, talking, writing, blood in its veins, light in its eyes, because the soul is in its body; growing, marching, conquering its foes, blessing its friends, and it is destined to become as universal as the race.

Many years ago I sat at a table in Springfield, Massachusetts, with the well-known medium, Dr. Slade, at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the sun shining into the room. Upon the table lay a common school slate. I examined it and saw that it was clean; I then placed a small fragment of pencil under it, as it lay there and Slade and I drew back from the table, the slate being in full view. I soon heard the pencil writing upon the slate, and was perfectly certain that no being in the body was touching it. When the sound of writing had ceased, raps were heard, and I then turned over the slate, and found the following message written upon it. It was written the day after a camp-meeting at Walden Pond, to which it refers:—

"My noble friend and brother, William Denton,—We all were present yesterday and enjoyed the great feast of seeing the gospel so *well* put forth and sustained by you; *noble* souls that *dare* come out and proclaim to the world the beauties of God. I cannot understand how the churches can abuse our heavenly father as they do. Can they love him? I should say no, for we cannot love one we live in fear of. God speed you my brother, and all that work for the spirit world. If the churches hate you, the angels will bless you. Mrs. Slade is here; she joins me in what I have already said. Stand up for the *right* and you will come out of darkness into light. My best respects to your wife and all my friends.—I am as ever,—E. Smedly."

Elisha Smedley was an old friend of mine, who had died in Michigan, about three or four years previous to this time. It is not the kind of letter that a college-bred professor would have written, but it is such a letter as my friend, who was a plain farmer, might be expected to write. There is a table of stone, infinitely more important to me than the tables of stone on which Jehovah is represented as writing on Sinai.

When I attended the Spiritual camp-meeting at Cassadaga in New York three years ago, Mr. Sour, a medium for various remarkable manifestations, was there. He took a double slate, which was handed around among an audience of about two hundred, to show that it was perfectly clean; a fragment of pencil was placed between the two slates, which were then closed, and a piece of string tied around them. Mr. Sour then held the slate in one hand in the daylight in the presence of the audience, when those near him heard the pencil writing, and when the slate was opened the following letter was found addressed to the friends present and signed H. H. Rouse. The brother of the spirit, Mr. Rouse, chief of police in Titusville,

Pennsylvania, was present at the meeting, and declared that the signature was that of his brother, who had been dead for seven years. To show that Mr. Rouse was correct, I present an accurate representation of the brother's signature before his death, taken from a letter which was furnished me by Mr. Rouse, which his brother had written seven years before; and below it the signature to the letter on the slate. The close resemblance must be apparent to every one at a glance, and this can only be reasonably accounted for by accepting the explanation that the spirit was present and wrote.





In the presence of such facts as these the dark curtain of death is pierced through and through with sunbeams. Death is an enemy only to those, and only to be dreaded by those who dare not or will not thoroughly investigate the Spiritual phenomena constantly taking place around them. The proud philosophers of Gallieo's time refused to look through his telescope and see the moons of Jupiter, for they had already decided in their superior wisdom that Jupiter had no moons, and no other man could know what they did not know. It was impious to discover what their superior wisdom had not enabled them to discern. And we need not travel far to discover just such philosophers to-day, who not only affirm that they have no evidence of future existence, but that no other man has; and with an arrogance worthy of his infallibleness, the pope, they make their ignorance the boundary of every other man's knowledge.

In contrast with such facts as I have presented, and hundreds of others that shine in my mental sky like suns. Christianity, eighteen hundred years off, fades to the glimmer of a glow-worm's lamp. It is evidence like this that makes Spiritualism a *living religion*. Judaism died with Moses, and was "buried in the valley over against Beth-peor." All that exists to-day is merely the dried bones, rattled occasionally in the synagogue. Christianity died with the men who first preached it, the only ones who could ever have known it to be true; the rest have only accepted their story at second or even at twentieth hand. There lies the cold corpse; true, it has been embalmed, and the doctors of divinity have exhausted all art in their attempts to galvanise it into life; they have assured us that is alive a thousand times, nay that the mere touch of it will make any dead body alive; but there it lies, no mortal living ever saw the light of its eye or heard a word out of its cold lips. The universalists have whitewashed its sepulchre, the unitarians have decorated it with flowers, they have dressed the corpse and made it look respectable; but, alas, it is stone dead, and the wise ones among them know it, and they console themselves as they tell us everything else is equally dead. Speak for yourselves and your religion, gentlemen; we have clasped the hands, we have heard the voices, we know the loved ones live who have gone before.

For Judaism to be equal to Spiritualism, it should be able to say, "Come up with me into the mountain, and you shall see the rocky tablets, as I receive them from the hands of Jehovah, and hear His voice as he talks to me, and see His glory. "For Christianity to be a living religion it should be able to show us Jesus, walking through our streets, laying his hands on the sick, and they recovering; stopping the hearses on our highways, calling to the enclosed corpses, and sending them back, living men, to weeping wives and children, to praise the living Jesus, the Lord of life and death. Instead of this it has but the incredible story to tell, which becomes less and less credible as day after day removes it so much farther from its original source. Yes, Spiritualism is alive, and herein lies the secret of its mighty power, and it will not die while there is a mourner's tears to be dried or a wounded spirit to be healed.

It is the only religion that does not depend upon an individual. Judaism is Mosaism. Take out Moses, and down comes the whole fabric, from Melchisidek to Malachi. If Moses did not see Jehovah and receive the moral and ceremonial law from Him, as the pentateuch declares, then the whole religion based on this is either a fancy or a forgery.

Christianity depends upon Jesus; take Him out and the sun is gone from the Christian's sky, leaving only a horrible night to close around his terrified soul. The Christian sings—

> "Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
> He whom I fixed my hopes upon."

Had Jesus never lived Christianity had never been; and when he ceases to be regarded as the Messiah Christianity will be no more.

Mormonism depends upon Joseph Smith. If he lied about the golden plates, then, my brother, your latter-day church is as flimsy as a cobweb, and a breath of common sense would blow it away. Buddhism was founded by Gautama, who is called by his believers the Buddha, and Mohammedanism on Mohammed; and if these men had never lived their respective religions had been forever unknown.

Spiritualism differs from all these, as science differs from them. No science depends upon a man. If Copernicus, Galileo, and Herschell had never been born, astronomy, though not as far advanced as it is now, would still have been a magnificent science; its truths were only waiting till men were sufficiently advanced to appreciate them. It is thus with Spiritualism; if the Fishes and the Foxes had never heard the raps at Hydesville, Spiritualism would still have been a religion, though not as fully developed as it is now, for many of its phenomena had been manifested for thousands of years, and the religion, which had been in the bud, was just ready to burst into bloom when the Hydesville manifestations took place. Before Copernicus was born, before telescopes were invented or Kepler had discovered the laws that go by his name, the earth had revolved, the planets had run their solar round, and the stars had drifted through the endless spaces. So before the first circle was formed, or the first medium known, spirits had existed for ages and communicated with human beings when conditions were favorable. Artificial religions are man-made, depend upon men for their establishment, and will die when the aid of man is withdrawn. They are like balloons that float while the gas is in them, and look fair enough, but as soon as the gas oozes out they shrink, and when it is gone they are empty bags. How long would Methodism last if its church meetings were closed, class-meetings abolished, prayer-meetings discontinued, and its books destroyed? Nine tenths of it would disappear in a year. What nature upholds grows like a tree by internal power; what is merely man-made, and lacks the sanction of fact, is like a flying feather, that can only be kept up by continual blowing; as soon as the breath ceases, down it comes. Spiritualism springs up spontaneously, and is forever kept up by facts that are constantly occurring, as trees are fed by the sap that courses through their veins.

No man ever found Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism where man had not planted them. But we can find Spiritualism in all ages, in all religions, and every country of the globe. The old Aryans, who were the progenitors of nearly all the people of modern Europe, worshipped the spirits of their ancestors. The old records of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, and India, all bear witness to the existence of this religion at an early period in the history of mankind. The Americans found it among the Indians of the western wild, the Spaniards discovered it in Mexico, the English in the South Sea Islands and New Zealand. We call it a new religion, but it is doubtless nearly as old as the human race. The Egyptian cherished it when he reared the pyramids, in fact it inspired him to build them, and the Chinese believed in it long before the days of Kung-Fu-Tse.

It is a scientific religion, and it is the only one. As the Christian religion advanced, in its early days, science and the love of science died out, till the dark ages overspread Europe, western Asia, and north eastern Africa, like a starless night. Under its influence, Alexandria, that had been a school of science and the home of philosophy, degenerated into an amphitheatre, where rival Christian sects struggled for power, alternately throwing and being thrown, the party in power anathematising and murdering the other, which only worked and waited for an opportunity to repay in the same manner. When the influence of genuine Christianity began to wane, science commenced to revive, and its leading advocates to-day have outgrown, not only the Christian spirit, but every form of Christianity.

It is the boast of Judaism and Christianity that they are supernatural; science can only deal with the natural and it has no faith in the supernatural; the supernatural to it is the unnatural. It is not natural for men to see Jehovah on a mountain, for God to write commandments on slabs of stone, for a child to be born without a human father, or for a man to be raised to life after he has been dead two days. Nor is it natural for a man with well-developed and unperverted reason to believe such things; hence it is almost impossible to convert a scientific or even an intelligent man to Christianity. It is exceedingly rare for Christian missionaries to convert an intelligent Buddhist, Parsee, or Confucian to Christianity, such a thing is almost unknown. Savages, like those of the South Sea Islands, can be readily induced to accept a religion whose marvellous stories are in harmony with their beliefs, and who have not intelligence to discern their unnatural character.

Spiritualism succeeds best among the most intelligent, and I think it may be truly said that no scientific man ever thoroughly investigated its claims without becoming satisfied of the genuineness of the phenomena that form its foundation; and when these are accepted, the philosophy and religion of Spiritualism naturally follow. Robert Hare, professor of chemistry in the university of Pennsylvania, wrote thus of Spiritualism in 1853:—"I feel called upon as an act of duty to my fellow creatures to bring whatever influence I possess to the attempt to stem the tide of popular madness, which in defiance of reason and science is fast setting in favor of the gross delusion called Spiritualism." This was before he had examined the phenomena. Two years afterward, having carefully examined the facts in the meantime, he became an open advocate of Spiritualism, as he continued to be till his death. In 1870 Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., wrote: "The whole affair" (that is the so-called Spiritual phenomena) is "a superstition . . . an unexplained trick—a delusion of the senses." This was before he had carefully investigated the matter. When he does this how different is his opinion! He then writes "Under the strictest test conditions, I have more than once had a solid, self-luminous, crystalline body placed in my hand by a hand which did not belong to any person in the room."

Alfred Russel Wallace, the world known naturalist, writes, "Up to the time I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. I was so thorough and confirmed a materialist that I would not at that time find a place in my mind for the conception of a Spiritual existence. . . Facts, however, are stubborn things. . . . The facts beat me; they compelled me to accept them as facts . . . and led me to accept Spiritualism."

Cromwell F. Varley, F.R.S., the well-known electrician, informs us, "Twenty five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever." After observing the foundation facts of Spiritualism for years he was compelled to accept them, and he writes, "That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is now too late to deny their existence."

Spiritualism grows out of the nature of things and was as certain to appear upon our planet, when it was ripe enough, as was man himself. Man lives after death, because he is essentially an undying spirit. We receive communications from the departed, because the spirit, separated from the body, finds itself able to communicate with those in the flesh. Thus for the first time in the history of the world, man's destiny becomes known to him, and he has a religion with a substantial foundation.

It is a religion that satisfies the great need of the human soul for assurance of future life. A dog cares nothing about to-morrow, and a savage very little about next week; but, all men, above the grade of a savage, are interested in the question, shall I in a hundred years be mud or man, mould to fatten a pumpkin, or a living, progressive soul? The materialist candidly tells us that the departed are like a shattered clock, a rotten log, a burnt-down house, yesterday's rainbow, and the flowers of last summer. Closed for ever are the lips of love; the eyes of affection shall no more light up with smiles nor brim with tears. The man, the woman, the child are less than the meanest worm that crawls, and all the dead are dust. Christianity is superior to this, for it brings stars into a sky that was inky black, and furnishes some at least with hope. We hear the cry, "one world at a time," but we are so constituted that we cannot avoid thinking of the next, even if we would. One day at a time is just as reasonable as one world at a time, but this is impossible to the intelligent. Do we expect evil to-morrow? it darkens like a cloud the sky of to-day; the joy that we anticipate in the future glorifies the present, as the unrisen sun gilds the tops of the eastern hills. Assure us of our future, and the future of our friends, and we will bear the ills of the present with the courage of martyrs. Their faith in the future made heroes of the early Christians, enabled them to sing in the dungeon, to bear the rack unmoved, and smile as they stood with the burning pile around them. If faith has done this what will not knowledge accomplish?

Mary Jenkins is a widow, who has just lost her son William, twenty years of age. He was not vicious, he was not a member of any religious organisation, he was never converted, but he was kind to his mother, whose affections were centred in him; he was her all. A fever seized him, the cold grave has closed over all that was left, and she cannot be comforted. Her minister tells her to go to the Bible for comfort and to the Bible she goes and reads, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." "But how many" she asks herself; "when will they awake? Will my boy awake there, and shall I awake, and shall I see and know him?" Where can she obtain the answer to these important questions? She turns to the New Testament, for the comfort that the Old is unable to give, and she reads, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." "Oh, but my boy did not die in the Lord; he cared nothing about the Lord; what blessing is there for him?" She reads again, "The fearful, the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers and whore-mongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." She knows that William was an unbeliever, he sometimes laughed at sacred things, he did not always speak the truth, he had never been born again, and her fears say, "Alas, my William has his part in that lake that burns with fire and brimstone. He has gone to that pit where day never sheds a beam, whose only rains are the tears of the lost, and its only breezes their sighs and groans," and her mother's love leads her to say, "I wish I was there to comfort him. Oh! shall I ever meet my boy?"

She hears of Emerson, the Concord philosopher; of his profound wisdom and his benevolent heart, and she resolves in the anguish of her soul to call upon him. She states her case: "Now, Mr. Emerson, is my boy alive, and shall we meet again." "Well," says Mr. Emerson, "we have no absolute proof of immortality, but it is highly probable that your son exists, and it is within the bounds of possibility that you may meet again." "Highly probable," repeats the mourning mother, "within the bounds of possibility" rings in her ears as she turns sadly and sorrowfully away.

She reads Tyndal and Huxley and Spencer, who she is told, are suns in the philosophic firmament of our age, but she fails to obtain from these suns one ray of immortal light. Their writings she finds to be spiritually dry as dust and dark as death. Sadder, fearfully sadder, but no wiser, she looks for comfort somewhere else.

She has heard of Spiritualism, but has always regarded it as something low and vulgar; it was to her the Nazareth, out of which no good thing could come. But at length she goes to a medium, a total stranger; raps are heard upon the table, and they profess to come from the spirit of her son. She is told by the raps to place a double slate upon the table and place between the slates a piece of slate pencil. She does so, and instantly hears the motion of the pencil on one of the slates, and on opening them she reads to her astonishment and delight,—"Dear Mother,—Cheer up; I am with you, your William watches over you for good. We shall meet again, Your loving son, WILLIAM JENKINS."

There it is, a *fac simile* of his handwriting. Away go clouds of gloom; joy chases sadness from her soul, and she blesses the only religion that has brought immortality to light, and returned from the field forever victorious over death.

Sometimes mourners are comforted by our Christian brethren with the assurance that "Jesus rose triumphant from the dead." Yes, but Jesus arose with flesh and blood and bones, and hence the tomb was empty when the women went to see it. But the tombs of our friends are not empty. No sound comes out of their stony lips, no angel proclaims that our friends are risen, no women run to proclaim the glad news. Our friends cannot rise as the gospels declare Jesus did. The resurrection of Jesus, could it be proved, can give us no assurance that our friends will rise. Mourners do draw consolation from the uncertainties of Christianity, but it is in the new religion that fountains of comfort flow for every sorrowing soul. We know that our friends were never buried, hence they do not need to rise; they never went to sleep, and therefore need no trumpet to awaken them; they never died, and they need no one to raise them from the dead. They never were as fully alive as when their friends mourned them as dead, but it was Spiritualism that convinced us of this. There is not a city or town, and scarcely a hamlet in any civilised country, into which our religion has not gone, pouring the balm of consolation into the mourner's heart by giving indisputable evidences of the presence of the departed. At its touch the "monster grim" has been transformed into an angel of light, and the gloomy portals of the tomb into the vestibule of heaven.

This religion found Robert Owen and Prof. Hare disbelievers in all future existence, and this condition of mind, though far preferable to a belief in eternal torment, is a sad one; life, to such, is a sail for a short time over stormy billows, a cold blast, a shudder, a gasp, the waves roll on and all is gone. So seemed life to Owen and Hare, but Spiritualism came to them and showed them that though the billows roll over us in death the essential man sails on over new seas, visits new continents, and an endless life of continual progress is presented to him. Death never reaches the man; we are the children of life, eternal life, and we bless the religion that has revealed this to our souls

It is a cheerful religion. Judaism, strange to say, is more cheerful than Christianity. It is just as ready to dance to the Lord as it is to sing to the Lord; it sounds the timbrell and the harp, and makes the Judean hills echo to the joyous sounds that swell from Mount Zion. But Christianity is preeminently a gloomy religion It puts the dancers in stocks and stifles mirth. It dooms most of mankind to endless woe; and how can a sympathetic person smile while he thinks that every moment souls go down to the pit of misery from which there is no escape? Who could laugh and smile, if he saw his dearest friends walking on the edge of a precipice without being aware of their danger? Make that precipice the side of a bottomless pit, from which no soul can escape, and who that know the danger of his friend would smile then?

I know of no religion that inspires such melancholy hyms as Christianity does Listen to them:—

"This world is but a fleeting show
For man's illusion given."
"Earth is a desert drear,
Heaven is my home."

"Lord, what a wretched land is this
That yields us no supply,
No cheering fruits, no wholesome trees,
No dreams of living joy."

"No room for mirth or trifling here
For wordly life or worldly fear
If life so soon be past."

To the man who wrote such hymns, the world is a floating wreck, of which the devil is the captain, and the business of the Christian is to swim ashore, with faith in Jesus as a bladder to keep him up.

Our religion destroys both the devil and death; it fills the infernal pit, breaks down the adamantine wall of heaven, relieves Peter of his unpleasant office, and bids all souls enter. It says, "Take the black plumes from the hearse, and in their place put blooming flowers." Every day is Easter, for souls are rising to the new life every moment, and our universal mother kisses them as they enter, and says, "bless you darlings," as she smilingly opens the door and welcomes them home, where there is rest for the weary, action for the vigorous, spiritual food for the hungry, knowledge for the ignorant, and love and hope for all.

It is a moral religion. I may be told that all religions are moral. Morality is not, however, absolutely essential to religion, though it is essential to a perfect religion. Abraham's religion made him at heart a murderer; it made multitudes of Christians persecutors and tormentors of their fellows, and it makes many living ones bigots.

I know of no religion whose teachings give men a stronger incentive to right doing than Spiritualism. Judaism sends the sins of the people off into the wilderness with the scape-goat, while Christianity sends the sins of its believers off with the scape-lamb. You may sin, and the penalty be borne by the innocent sufferer. You may sow hell for a life-time—all but the last moment—and reap heaven for an eternity. It confounds the distinctions between vice and virtue, when it teaches that faith removes the penalty of wrong-doing. After the sinner has been "washed in the blood," according to it, he is the peer of the purest saint. Had Nero but known that Jesus died for sinners, and had he exercised saving faith in him, even when the Roman rowdies were thirsting for his blood, he might have covered over his life of crime with a beautiful robe of Christ's righteousness, and taken his place with the purest and the best.

Spiritualism teaches what science does, that nothing can be annihilated; we can no more obliterate the consequences of our misdeeds than we can call back yesterday. We are what all our past has made us, and it is as impossible for a man's sins to be blotted out as for him to start life again a new-born child. Our religion repeats that ancient scripture, "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The Spiritualist who is a liar, a thief, a licentious or intemperate person is so in direct contradiction to the legitimate influence of his faith; and with its universal acceptance will come the righteousness that alone can satisfy the demands of the God that sits enthroned in every soul. It does not say, with orthodoxy, "Do not tarry till you are better." It says "being better is just what is needed, and you cannot tarry for a better purpose." It does not say, "Jesus paid it all," but it teaches that what we owe to nature we must ourselves pay, and nothing can release us from the obligation. By proving to us that the eyes of our departed friends are on us, it give us a strong incentive to right-doing, and, by rousing the highest faculties of our nature, it exalts the man within us, and enables us to subdue the animal desires, which so frequently lead captive the human soul.

I do not place this before you as a perfect religion. Its foundation is divine, but the building is of necessity human, and partakes of human imperfections. The consequences of preceding ages of ignorance and superstition cannot be removed in a few years. In the name of Spiritualism ignorant and unprincipled men and women have passed off, and are still passing off, second rate nonsense for sense and even science, professedly under the inspiration of the wisest and best who have dwelt among us. Swedenborg is made to talk trash, that

would have disgraced him when he was ten years of age; and Sir Isaac Newton repeats baby lessons in astronomy to admiring groups in all parts of the world. Franklin is a spiritual guide for thousands of believers in various circles, who waste their time listening to ignorant mediums who rant in his name. Theodore Parker lectures to thousands by the hour, through those professing to be his mouth-pieces, without uttering one sentence characteristic of him, unless it has been borrowed from his books.

Time is, however, fast correcting this. We are learning that it is not so much who says it as what is said. The fly, though on Chimborazo, is as far from being a condor as ever, and nonsense, though spoken by a God, is no better than if it came from the lips of an idiot.

Spiritualism is a free religion. Judaism put such a yoke upon its believer that not a single Jew consents to wear it to-day Its burden of superstitious ceremonies crushed every man to the earth that attempted to stand under it, and every son of Abraham to-day refuses to even attempt to lift it Christianity promises freedom and rest, but it comes to us with suspicious looking gyves in its hand, as it tells us to close our eyes and kneel. Obey, and you are undone. It says in the sweetest of voices, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You are ready to obey, and rush to the arms of Jesus, which are ready to embrace you, but the voice adds, "take my yoke upon you." Is this the rest we are to receive, the rest that puts a yoke upon us? No, No, hands off! Yokes for slaves, freemen can never consent to wear them; we would not wear your yoke, though it were light as a feather, and a grasshopper would not find it a burden. "Ye are my servants," says Jesus, "I am your Lord and master." We say to him, who made thee a master over us? The proud prerogative of man is to rule himself, and we would not give up our birthright though a kingdom were the price of our bondage. In democratic America we have said to the King, "You may lay your sceptre down, you cannot be king over us, for we are all kings, and our laws are the embodiment of our will." So we say to this usurper, Jesus, "We are all masters, and we cannot allow you to rule over us, for having arrived at man's estate, we are fully competent to do that for ourselves."

The religion of orthodoxy is aristocratic; its God is a great mogul, an absolute monarch, who demands the most abject submission of every soul; a mediator is necessary to approach him. Before him bows the multitude upon their knees, forever sounding his praises: his heaven is for his favorites, his prison, which is hell, is for all who will not submit to his authority. Spiritualism is democratic; every man's house is a cathedral and he a priest; his parlour is the holy of holies, and he can converse, if not with Moses and Elias, with spirits just as wise and intelligent. It breaks the shackles of priestcraft, it lifts up the slave of Jehovah and Jesus, sets him upon his feet, and reveals to him that he is also a man. No god worthy of reverence could ever desire men to be his slaves, and the redeemer who demands that we shall wear a yoke as the price of our liberty is only a slaveholder by another name. The gospel that I present to you reveals the universal spirit, self-existent, eternal, intelligent, our mother as much as our father; who is never angry, never disturbed, neither pleased by our flatteries nor troubled by our neglect, infinitely patient, sublimely calm, that out of the chaos of the past has brought the order and beauty that we behold to-day, and is urging the planet and man on daily to more and more glorious achievements. This gospel preaches man the child of God, who needs no one to reconcile him to his father, any more than a mother needs some one to reconcile her to her babe, and when man receives this gospel he is nature's freeman, and he whom nature makes free is free indeed.

It is destined to be a universal religion. I am aware how easy it is for men to mistake a part, and sometimes a very small part, for the whole, as the Marianne Islanders supposed, that their little island was the entire habitable globe. The Mormon fully expects the time to come when all men will accept Joseph Smith as the prophet of the Lord, and he sings loudly and fervently,—

> "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah,
> Jesus anointed that prophet and seer;
> Blessed to open the lost dispensation;
> Kings shall extol him and nations revere."

That man was Joseph Smith; and the Mormon believes that all men will be Smithites, as the orthodox believer does that they will all be Christians. The Jew of old expected all mankind to bow at the footstool of Jehovah and acknowledge Moses as the chosen prophet of God. There is indeed no set of know-nothings in the world, who have set up a calf to worship, but expect that the time will come when all the world will kneel with them in the dirt and adore it. But the narrowness, the one-sidedness, unreasonableness, and utter unfitness for universal acceptance of the most popular religions of the day are manifest at an unprejudiced glance.

To be a Mohammedan you must believe that Mohamed was the specially appointed prophet of God, by whom his will was revealed to mankind. But what common sense man can ever accept of this fanatical camel driver as the miraculously appointed ambassador of the universal soul?

You think, Jew, that yours is destined to become the universal religion; but, according to your law, all males were to appear before the God of Israel in the place that he should choose, three times a year, at the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles; and since, as the Psalms inform us, he chose Mount Zion, all the men of the world must journey to Palestine three times a year. But even with our present facilities of travel, no sooner would an Englishman or an American arrive at home than he would commence to pack up for another pilgrimage, to appear before the Lord in Mount Zion. If the Jewish religion became universal, the crowd around Jerusalem would be so great that millions could never get within ten miles of Mount Zion. To obey the sabbath law, which declares, "Thou shalt make no fire in thy habitation on the sabbath-day," multitudes would be compelled to lie in bed all day or freeze to death. Your religion, Oh Jew, is no more fit for universal humanity than a baby's clothes for a man of forty. You can water the world with a penny squirt, and dispense with the clouds, as easily as you can make your religion subserve the needs of the world.

"But ours is the universal religion," says the Christian; "it breaks down the narrow ordinances and the childish rituals of the Jewish dispensation. There is now neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ Jesus, and we shall never rest till every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." But to be a Christian we must believe that Jesus, an ignorant Galilean carpenter, was either God himself or the only begotten son of God, miraculously sent by him to be the Savior of mankind, and that he was miraculously raised from the dead. But how is an intelligent man to receive any evidence of this? Our Christian neighbours say, "Come to Jesus," but they do not pretend that we can really hear or see him and we can find no reliable or consistent account of him. The more closely a thinker examines the stories of his life, and the less faith he has in them. The more intelligence a man has, and the more likely he is to be damned for lack of faith in Christianity, and the less intelligence, the more readily he can credit the unreasonable and make his salvation sure. This is the reason why nearly all scientific men are unbelievers in Christianity, though they were nearly all taught it in their infancy, and it is the reason why as science grows the influence of Christianity diminishes.

Your religion, Christian, belongs to the days of genii, fairies and giants, of griffins, satyrs, mermaids and fiery dragons. The Hottentot or the man-eating Feejee Islander may receive it, but it is not for us, and can never be the religion of universal humanity.

Our religion is reasonable, it can bear the searching glance of science with her fearless eyes, it satisfies the great needs of the soul. When a man goes to a Christian church, he too often leaves his reason behind the door with his umbrella. "Were I to reason on religion as I do on science," said Farraday, "I could never be a

Christian." Reason calls for knowledge, Christianity demands faith; Reason demands miracles now, if they were ever performed, Christianity demands acceptance of the dead past that can never be repeated, on pain of damnation. Spiritualism teaches that man is a spirit, and points to the living facts that demonstrate it; it declares that the spirit separated from the body can and does communicate with those still in the body, and it presents an array of evidence in its favor that is absolutely overwhelming. Kings, Queens, presidents, lawyers, doctors, scientists of all branches, clergymen, sceptics, old men of ninety, and babes that can but lisp, unite in testifying to the reality of spirit communion, and therefore to the probability of its universal acceptance.

It harmonises with science, and rejoices in its victories. Geology comes and reveals to us a past that seems almost infinite. A fiery globe rolls under us, and we see streams of metal of varied colours flowing over a surface bright as the sun at noonday. Then a heaving crust, black as night, rising in bubbles here and there, and fiery torrents as they burst pouring out of them. Then life blossoming in radiate forms at the sea-bottom, advances to the fish, crawls in the reptile, flies in the bird, walks in the quadreped, and stands erect and thinks in the man, at first rude and brutal, low-browed and savage, but after hundreds of milleniums writing bibles and apeing the gods.

Christianity stands aghast at such a revelation. It is a Samson, holding the pillars of its temple within its embrace, and that will soon topple it into a heap of ruins.

How feels our religion in the pressure of these grand facts? It greets them, as the lark greets the morning. It gives us facts that link with these in the most perfect harmony, forming one grand chain uniting earth and heaven. You show the past, it says to Geology, I show the present and the future. You tell of the progress of the byegone ages, I tell of the progress of th ages to come.

"But," says an objector, "your religion can never become universal, for it lacks the support of the respectable." And who pray are the respectable? Those who have managed by accident or by knavery to acquire more than their share of the world's wealth. Save us from such respectability. Were it respectable it might be as superficial and heartless as episcopalianism, as dead as quakerism, and as fearful as presbyterianism. The only respectability that is worthy of respect comes by right and truth, and with these on our side we shall win our way to earth's remotest bounds.

Blessings on Spiritualism; it came to us when we were travelling in a land of darkness, peopled with devils, and other fearful monsters. Overhead were dense clouds charged with vengeance, muttering their thunders in our ears. Now and then a radiant star beamed for a moment, and then the darkness rolled over blacker than before. But Spiritualism came like an angel of cheer; she took us by the hand, led us out of the valley of darkness, set us on the mountain, opened the gates of the day, and filled our souls with joy; the birds around us are singing, the streams are leaping, and the sunshine gilds with glory the universal landscape.

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JOSEPH COOK IN BRISBANE.

HE has arrived, at last he is in our midst, the long-looked-for, the great man, the armour-clad defender, destroyer, and distorter of Christianity; I mean Joseph of Boston, U.S.A., the forty-pounder, who had "not an unoccupied nor an unengaged hour left open" to him in Australia. The clergy of Brisbane could not bear the idea of allowing such a great man to leave the colonies without coming to their help. Alas! infidelity is on the increase; "it casts a chill on everything we do," said one of them at a meeting convened to consider his terms; they must secure him at any price to stem the tide of infidelity fast gaining ground in Brisbane. They sent for his terms—the reply was £40 per lecture and expenses; rather expensive, but money no object. They telegraphed back "accepted," and Mr. Cook came on—to save souls for the good of Christianity, for the glory of God, and the good of his fellow creatures; of course the £200 for five lectures was a second consideration, a mere matter of form. He has come; he will go; so will the £200.

Is it true that Christianity (so called) is in such a dangerous condition that it requires a prop, a professional lecturer, at an expense of £40 per night? Christ did not send a letter a head to the next town, asking a guarantee of £40 per night before he would preach to the people. No; he said, "Take nothing for your journey; provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; freely ye have received, freely give." It would be well to revise those passage in the New Testament as soon as possible, and substitute: "Take nothing for your journey, but before passing on to the next town, in all cases receive a guarantee of *not less than* £40 per lecture and expenses; thus providing for yourself gold and silver in abundance. As freely as ye receive, so freely give."

If Joseph Cook and others like him were truly in earnest, and thought their fellow creatures were really going into everlasting damnation, they would strive to rescue them, as Jesus did, without money, for the love of mankind, and not stand by and see them damned if they did not dub up £40 per night.

Verily, if Christ was now on the earth he would have considerable trouble to find his true followers. Joseph Cook, his champion, would be a long way behind, and Christ would find himself classed among those "notoriously connected with schemes for the propagation of immorality," and one of the "prominent" ones, who "have been sent to gaol" for disseminating truth.

A small pamphlet has been published for gratuitous distribution illustrating the side he does not speak about, and that the public do not read about only in fifth-rate journals. It is headed "Joseph Cook; Reports and Criticisms, supplementary selection (complementary to Reports and Criticism issued by the committee). Five thousand copies are now being distributed gratis, their cost being defrayed by a few gentlemen. This will act as an antidote, and throw off some of the superfluous glory. This pamphlet he will doubtless class among the "infamous publications" circulated for the benefit of the "loafer classes of the community"—larrikins, hoodlums, &c.

Ah, well, we know another publication that Joseph talks about as the "word of God." parts of which are far too infamous for man to be the author of in this age, much less God. It is said, "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Joseph Cook might do this a little more. TRUTH is God's word. God cannot lie.

GEO. SMITH.

MR. MILNER STEPHEN is still continuing his public healings, at the Horticultural Hall, and meeting with good success. We have seen testimonials sent to him by grateful patients whom he has cured of moon-blindness and cancer. Miss Jones, whose deposition was published in a previous issue, has attended some of those public healings and proved the possession of her sight by pointing out colours and objects, also reading letters.

To Correspondents.

TRUE BLUE.—We cannot extend the controversy further. Although we give four extra pages we have still several articles awaiting publication. Your paper is an able one, but as neither proposition is demonstrable the controversy might be interminable.

ENQUIRER.—We do not publish anonymous correspondence. Circles such as you speak of would be of little service to give conviction unless test mediums were available and they are very rare.

CONTEMPORARY NOTES.

SPIRITUALISM must not forget that it is the new born child of historical development. It must not be ungrateful to the faiths upon which our ancestors fed, and from which they derived their vital power in times of sore need. The heir of the ages just entering into his estate must have no sneer for the forms of thinking that were so dear to those who have toiled, bled, and died for his enrichment. Every blunder made in the past has saved *us* from shame; every agony endured has won for *us* a heaven of bliss. The great end of Spiritualism should be how best to utilise, reform, and enlarge existing systems. Woe to him who in its name treads over all, like Alaric the Goth, blasting the ground whereon he moves! The Spiritualist is not an Iconoclast, but a Builder. His mission is to destroy—by enlargement and re-construction. Its tone of proclamation must swell with the sweet volume of love, not that of denunciation.—*Light*.

He who with many powers of indignation in him, can be provoked and yet restrain himself and forgive, is the strong man and the spiritual hero. So let not the bearers of false witness and the unblushing distributors of gross insults imagine that the objects of their assaults are *weak* because they are *silent*; it is for that very reason that they are strong.—*Banner of Light*.

One of the most hopeful and cheering signs of the times in connection with Spiritualism is the desire, growing year by year more apparent, to bring our facts and our theories, to the tribunal of sober common sense. It is being recognised that the only attitude towards the subject capable of standing the test of time is one on which shrewd discrimination and sound judgment are brought to bear. Facts must be keenly sifted, and a cool *unbiased* judgment exercised in dealing with the theories which they seem to suggest. Spiritual phenomena have not stood their ground by being offered up on the shrine of credulity and superstition, but only so far as their basis was established by a stern and rigid conformity to the dictates of reason, and an unflinching honesty of purpose shewn on the part of *those who sought them*. Just in the ratio that Spiritualists have adopted these methods has the movement gained ground, and become acceptable to earnest seekers after truth. The progress has been slow; at one time scarcely apparent, at others seemingly retrograde; nevertheless, it has been sure. Adopting this method, marvels and wonders may become conspicious only by their absence; the worthies of the past may no more return to spout their bad grammar and worse sense; but we shall at least have the genuine satisfaction of knowing that the facts we are able to present to the world are so many solid and reliable additions to the science which deals with man as a spiritual being, with the existence of spiritual world, and with the duality and continuity of life.—John S. Farmer, editor *Psychological Review*.

We learn from *Light* that Miss Wood, the medium for spirit materialization who was said to have been "exposed" a few years ago, is now giving séances to members of the Central Association of Spiritualists, London, of an eminently satisfactory character.

The *Herald of Progress* claims to be the "exponent of the phenomena of Spiritual Gifts, in proof of the reality of life after physical death, and the fact of Ministering Spirits sent forth to guide those who put their trust in the Lord God Almighty." Have we not here more narrowness, more limitation of the workings of the Infinite Spirit? Are ministering spirits sent forth to guide those alone who put their trust in the "Lord God Almighty?" They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

PROFESSOR Huxley, writing of William Harvey, says:—"If William Harvey had been a dishonest man—I mean in the high sense of the word—a man who failed in the deal of honesty—*he would have believed what it was easiest to believe*—that which he received on the authority of his predecessors. *He would not have felt that his highest duty was to know of his own knowledge that that which he said he believed was true*, and we should never have had those investigations, pursued through good report and evil report, which ended in discoveries so fraught with magnificent results for science and for man." Are not we Spiritualists doing as Harvey did?

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